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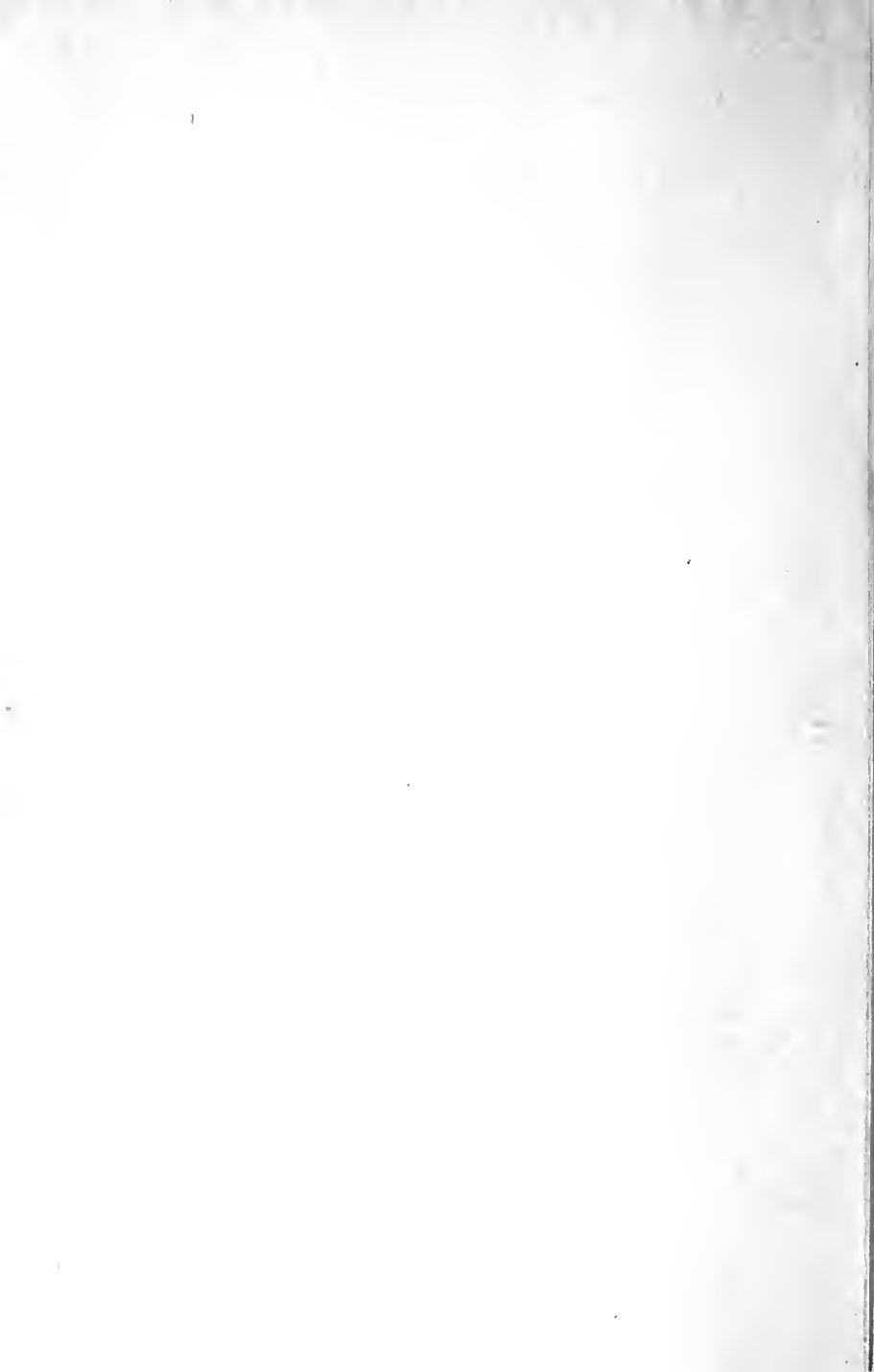
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A YEAR AS A
GOVERNMENT AGENT

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MRS. NORMAN DE R. WHITEHOUSE AND SONNY

A YEAR AS A GOVERNMENT AGENT

By
VIRA B. WHITEHOUSE

(Mrs. Norman de R. Whitehouse)
*Director for Switzerland of the Committee on
Public Information in 1918*

Fully Illustrated



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A Year As a Government Agent

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I dedicate this account of my year as a government agent to two friends:

To George Creel whose freedom from prejudice and whose courage in combatting the prejudices of others made possible the work herein recorded.

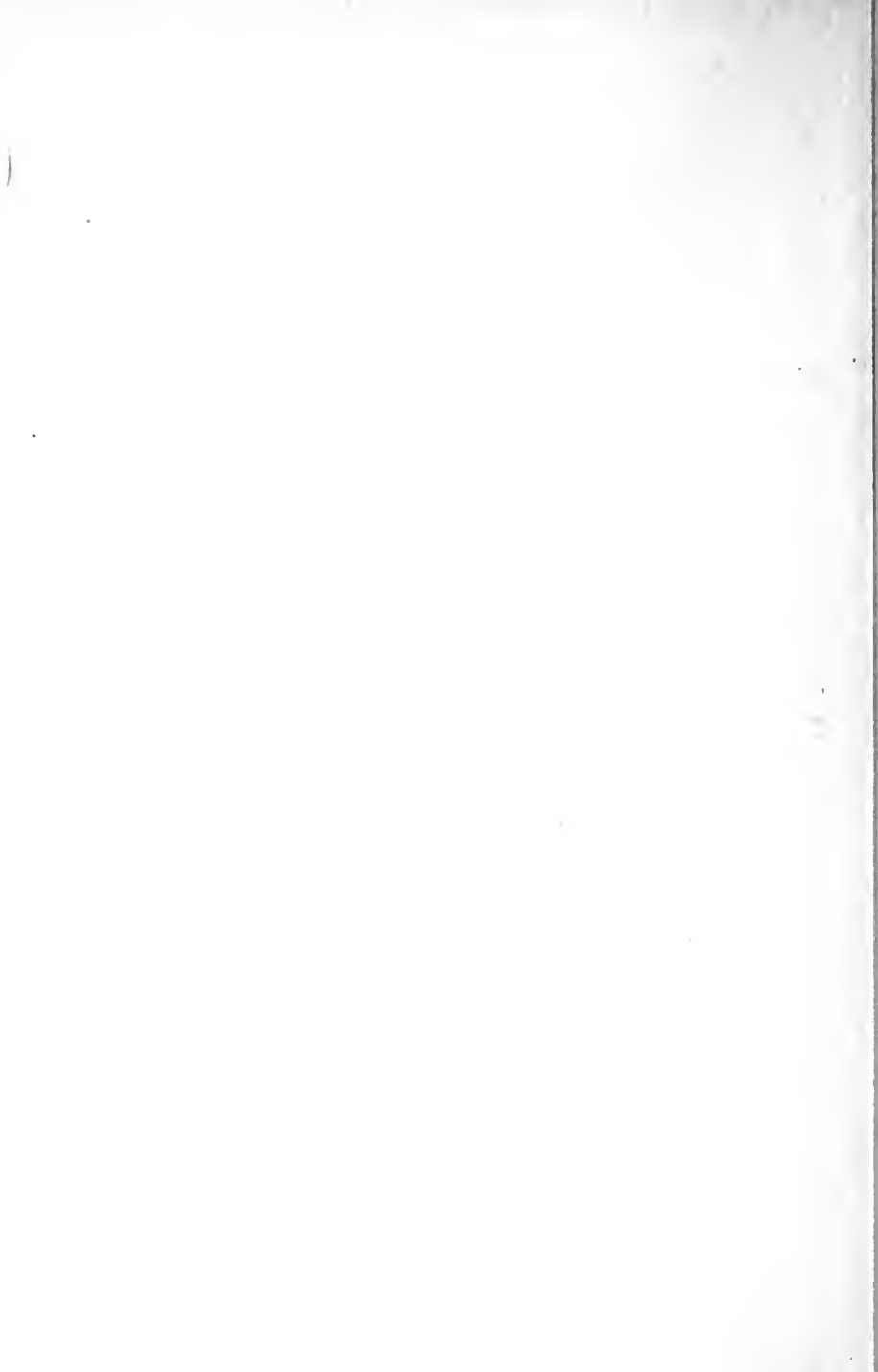
And to Clarence Day, Jr., without whose interest, encouragement and—yes, nagging, I should never have had the presumption to write of it.





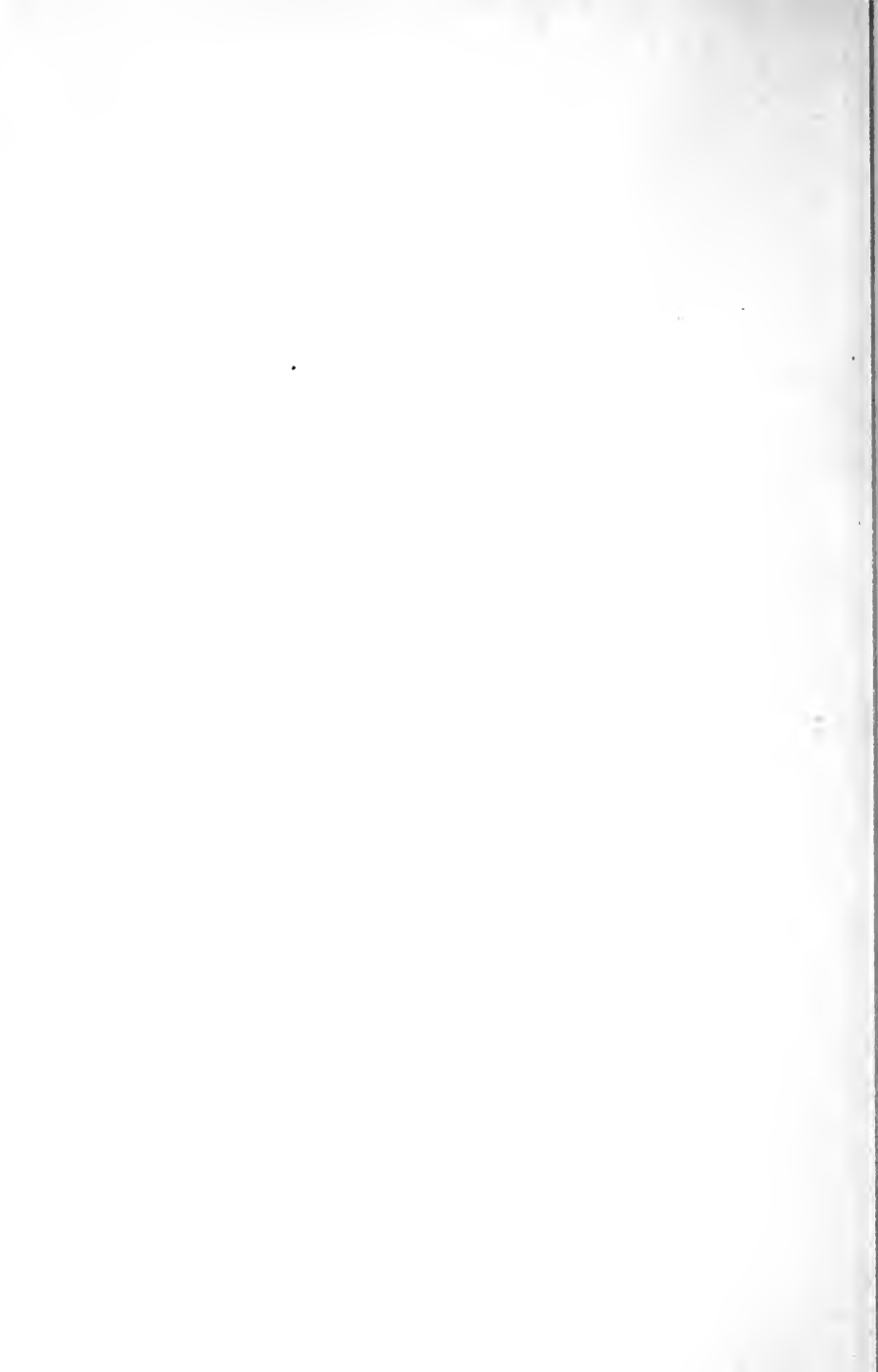
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A YEAR AS A
GOVERNMENT AGENT



A YEAR AS A GOVERNMENT AGENT

CHAPTER I

MY APPOINTMENT

AT the time our country went into the great war Switzerland had become known as the center of international war intrigue. Wild stories were heard about the activities there of German spies and of the plots and propaganda with which they were busy. The general situation in Switzerland was recognized in diplomatic circles as complicated and difficult, because of that country's geographical and political position. There it was, a little neutral state in the very middle of Europe, surrounded by warring countries, the meeting-place of the representatives of all those countries. It was not strange that it was nervous about its security and jealous of its neutrality.

When I was appointed to direct the work of the Committee on Public Information in that

particular country many people were undoubtedly surprised. What experience could a woman have had to fit her for such work in so delicate a situation? The mere fact that a woman was chosen was in itself enough to cause comment. Of course, sex had really nothing to do with the fitness of the choice. The time had come when liberal men recognized that there is no sex in ability, and when conscientious men wanted their country's work done by the people they thought most capable to do it. Whether I was the most capable person is quite another question, and that question was one for George Creel, the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information, to decide. Mr. Creel is a liberal man and free from the usual prejudice against placing women in positions of responsibility. He knew my ability to work hard, because he had worked with me in the 1915 New York State Women Suffrage campaign. In fact, when he asked me to go he said it was because he remembered how hard I had made him work. I had slave-driven him, he said. On my part, when the position was offered me I accepted it without hesitation, and I should have done so even if I could have foreseen the loneliness, the difficulties, and the strange obstacles I was to meet. I had learned in the suffrage campaigns in which I had worked that one of the great stumbling-blocks to the advance of women is our very general reluctance to accept responsibility. Since the beginning of

the world we have been hypnotized and have hypnotized ourselves into a doubt of our ability. I had talked to other women so often about the necessity of assuming responsibility, and accepting other people's judgment as to our own ability, that I could not hesitate on that score. I had also taken the war very seriously from the beginning. Every phase of suffering for which it was responsible had pictured itself vividly to my imagination. I had longed to join the women who were doing their share directly to help toward the final victory, although I had never had any dreams of being a heroine, of nursing at the very front under shell-fire, or of inspiring others to deeds of bravery. I knew that my part at best would be only hard, unpicturesque work at an office desk in safety. But I wanted to do what I could. During the first years of the war there was no question of it. I was working with every ounce of energy I possessed for democracy at home—to pass the suffrage amendment in New York State.

I felt comparatively free when the amendment was adopted in November, 1917. The following month, after having finished a thousand and one details left over from the campaign, having helped make and put into operation plans for educational and patriotic work for the suffrage organization, I went to a National American Women Suffrage convention in Washington, and while there I saw George Creel.

I told him I wanted to do some war-work. He said it was a strange coincidence that he was about to write to me to ask me to go as representative of the Committee on Public Information to South America or to Switzerland. I at once refused the first suggestion, because I believed that the general attitude toward women in South America would make such work on the part of a woman impracticable. The suggestion that I should go to Switzerland interested me immensely, although I knew little about that country. I had been there several times as a tourist. I had a vague idea of its general outline and position in the middle of Europe. I knew a large proportion of it was mountains—high, bare, and beautiful. Of course, I knew that all Switzerland is divided into three parts which speak respectively Italian, French, and German. But I eagerly looked in the encyclopedia to see what proportion there is of each and was surprised to find that of the twenty-two cantons all but seven have a majority of German-speaking population, and most of these are entirely German-speaking, and that Italian is spoken in only one or two. Its size and the number of its inhabitants interested me immensely, because I had just been chairman of a victorious campaign in a state of about 50,000 square miles, with about 10,000,000 inhabitants. I wanted to compare the two territories. I was pleased to find

that Switzerland is about one-third the size in area of New York State, and has a population about two-thirds that of New York City. This latter statement would probably be contradicted by a Swiss, if it should be brought to his attention, as not being accurate. Once, in Switzerland, I spoke of its population as being, roughly speaking, about 4,000,000. "Oh no," I was told, "not at all!" I wondered. Hadn't I seen not once, but many times, the population put at 3,800,000? Had my memory begun to fail me? I said, "I've seen it put at 3,800,000." "Yes," they said, "about 3,800,000, but not about 4,000,000!"

I knew it was the oldest republic, but when I went there I was constantly surprised at the differences between our form of government and theirs. They have two federal houses, as we have, but their President is not a president as ours is, elected by the whole people at a national election. Their President is really a committee of seven, the Federal Council, chosen by the two houses. The man who is called President is the chairman of the Federal Council of seven, with a one-year term. Later, I was to learn how in some ways they are more progressive than we, and in others very much more conservative.

This was as little as I knew of the Republic of Switzerland, although I had worked for several years in a cause that had aroused my interest particularly in governmental forms.

The arrangements for my departure at first proceeded smoothly and quickly. I made two conditions—that I should be expected to do only such work as would be legitimate and friendly in the eyes of the Swiss, and that I should have a recognized official position with the title of representative or director for Switzerland of the Committee on Public Information. These conditions Mr. Creel readily accepted.¹ My duties were to be the handling and distribution to news agencies and the press in Switzerland of cable and wireless news dealing with events in America, the preparation of special articles and pamphlets, the showing of motion-picture reels, etc.; in fact, such activities as would put before the people of a neutral country the aims and ideals of America at war, and the manner in which she was putting them into effect, and, also, the sending, in return, to America of articles about Switzerland and Swiss affairs from Swiss writers. There were no detailed instructions as to how I was to do this work. I had not sought them—I wanted to be as unhampered as possible in working out conditions as I should find them in a strange country.

I was ready to go at a day's notice. Mr. Creel and I agreed that we should seek to avoid publicity as to my going, but he prepared a statement for me to give out in case it seemed wise. He gave me a letter of appointment,² as

¹Appendix I.

²Appendix II.

representative of the Committee on Public Information, and in this letter he said that the State Department was cabling both the American embassy in Paris and the legation in Berne, informing them of my departure, so that they would be prepared for my arrival. He assured me that I should have a diplomatic passport. It all seemed simple and easy, and I thought I was about to sail without a hitch, when one night I was awakened by a reporter at the telephone, who said that Mr. Creel had made a public statement of my appointment. I was surprised, in view of our agreement, and, not understanding the situation, I refused to comment. The next day there were long and inaccurate accounts in some of the New York daily papers. These were followed by an announcement in one paper that Mr. Lansing, Secretary of State, objected to the appointment of a woman to such a position and, in fact, that there was general opposition on the part of the State Department to the foreign activities which the Committee on Public Information was about to organize. There was a prompt denial by Mr. Lansing.

My passport, when it came, was not a diplomatic passport. Mr. Creel undertook to set the matter straight and assured me again that a diplomatic passport would be forwarded to me by special messenger and reach me before I sailed. I expected it up to the very minute of

leaving, but finally went without it. And that is the way my troubles began.

In the mean time, my friends, having heard of the difficult living conditions abroad, had looked after my comfort. They gave me sweaters and woolly jackets and warm lined gloves, canned heat, boxes of sugar, and everything one was supposed to need and not be able to obtain when one went across the sea. Among my husband's contributions was a big box of chocolates which he himself had carefully chosen, because every one knew that there was no candy to be had in France, through which country I was going. After a number of delays in sailing, a day came when the ship was really ready. My husband and little girl went with me to the dock. It was cold and windy. We parted at the gang-plank. I boarded the ship alone and waved them good-by from the deck. I saw them walk down the dock arm in arm, my little girl's skirts a trifle too short, my husband's overcoat a little too big in the back, and my large box of chocolates being carried away, held tightly under his arm.

All afternoon I watched the loading of the ship with coal from scows. The coal was hardly more than black dust and over the heaps and hollows made by the huge swinging scoops two little long-tailed dogs played happily. One was a very dirty little dog, but the other had the shiniest black satin coat in the world. It grew dark and I went supperless to my bunk. About

midnight we sailed, and I was off to work for my country.

The trip seemed unreal, because it was so exactly like the stories I had read of ocean crossings in war-time. It made me think especially of *The Martial Adventures of Henry and Me*. There were the Red Cross workers, there was the large contingent of Y. M. C. A. men and women. There were the dark decks, the closed port-holes—everything just as in the stories. To give our particular crossing a little individuality, there were six hundred Polish troops in the steerage, and in our cabin a group of young Polish officers, who, like story-book Poles, were filled with the wrongs of Poland and the most patriotic determination to right them. There was a man who had been on one of the steamers sunk by a German submarine before we went into the war, who had been rescued unconscious after being in the water for hours. There were others who had crossed when there were alarms and who themselves had seen submarines. There was a great deal of nervous talk about the danger of submarines.

The first night in the danger zone I must confess to going to bed with a delightful sensation of excitement, as on Christmas Eve when I was a child. The next morning, when I waked up after a sound sleep, I was a little disappointed that nothing thrilling had happened. I took myself to task. A pacifist who hates wars and hopes

that they will be abolished from the face of the earth had no right to feel as I did.

We had no sooner left New York than there were rumors on board that I was some kind of a spy, going abroad to work for our country. The very name of the Committee on Public Information, which was at that time a new department of the government and not generally known, seemed to suggest to everyone (by the principle of contraries, I suppose) that its work was secret intelligence. I always resented very intensely such suspicions, but it was no use. They cropped up to the very end. When I was in London, on my way to sail from Liverpool for America, after my work was done, the correspondent of the Associated Press greeted me with, "You have been working as a spy in Switzerland, haven't you?" And, as always, I made a scene. Spies may be a necessary part of war machinery. Undoubtedly their work is often dangerous and calls for the highest degree of discretion and courage and patriotism, and, of course, must be of value in saving many lives. I have been asked why I so particularly resent being thought a spy. It is partly because I dislike secret and devious ways and the false relations with people which cannot be avoided in the effort to obtain secret information, but especially I hate the whole system of spying, because I believe it is one of the old, wrong methods which the world is about to outgrow.

On the steamer from the beginning the passengers fell into groups. The Red Cross people drew together and talked over their plans. The Y. M. C. A. held meetings, and the near-sighted young society man who was going over with them merely for an experience grew intimate with the clergyman who said that "no member of the association whose middle name is Christian" should smoke or countenance smoking. The Polish officers talked together of the wrongs of Poland. I found that I, alone, with my vague problems of publicity in a foreign country under unknown conditions, had no one with whom to share them. At night, in my bunk, the job looked very big and nebulous.

We landed in Bordeaux early one morning, and a little later I left for Paris. In the few hours there in Bordeaux I saw the first of the war conditions that we had all been reading about. There, too, things were just as the war stories described them. There were the women conductors on the street-cars with stern, business-like faces; they were the first I had seen. There was the heavy brown bread, the coffee without sugar, and, worst of all, the war cripples on the streets. On the trip to Paris, which I was later to know so well, I sat in a dilapidated railroad carriage and was impressed chiefly by the cutting down of the trees all along the line.

We arrived in Paris late at night. Two young men, who had crossed on the steamer and who

were going to drive ambulances for the Red Cross, went with me in a red taxicab such as we were all familiar with before the war, and left me at a hotel near the Place Vendôme, where I had often stayed before. We had been told that the hotels in Paris were crowded. But here there was room for me, one flight up on the corner. I went to bed tired, but satisfied that the first stage of my journey was over.

If one tells the story of one's experiences to others for any profit or interest there may be in it, I suppose it is necessary to be frank about all one's weaknesses. So I must tell you that I am shy—that I have always been shy. I hate to ask the way or buy the tickets. When I was a child I must have been a constant mortification to my parents. I wouldn't show off. When I was exhibited to strangers along with my rosy-cheeked, curly-haired, friendly sister the best I could do was to cry. I was even abnormally shy.

I have overcome it in many directions. I have learned to go to social functions of all kinds without a catch of the breath. I have learned to make suffrage speeches even on street corners with less than the first agony. But overcoming shyness in one direction does not help very much when it comes to activities of a new sort.

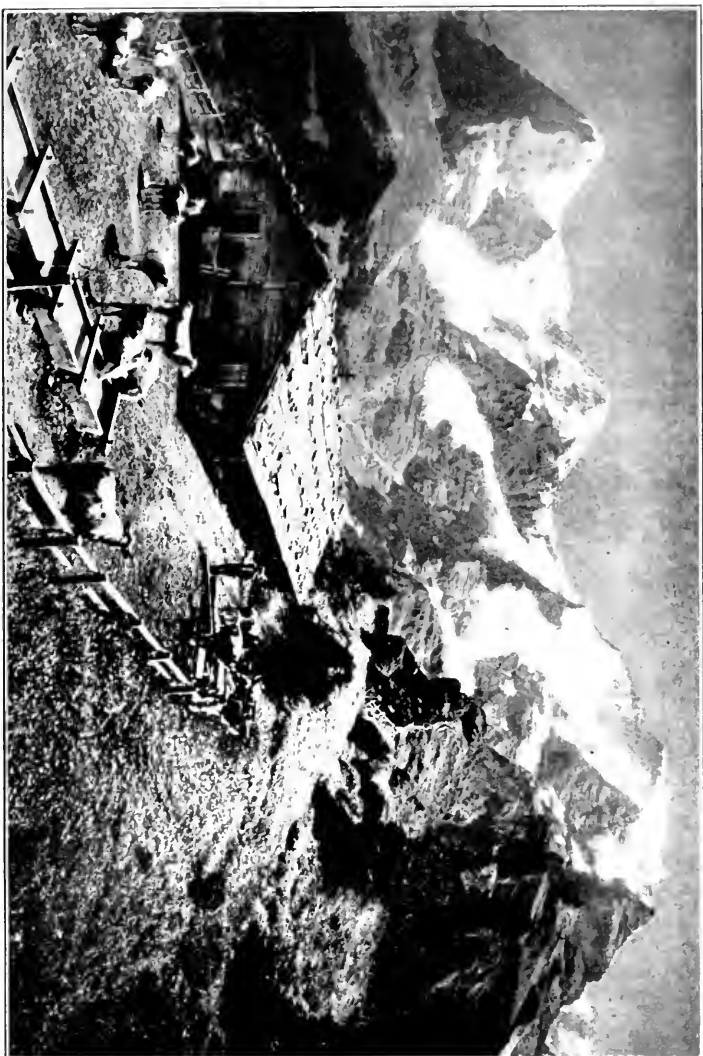
When I waked the first morning in Paris I felt busy and interested enough, but desperately shy. I had letters from the French Mission in Washington to the Maison de la Presse in Paris.

From them I was to find out everything I could about Switzerland, especially what our friends and enemies were doing there in the way of publicity and propaganda. I was also to obtain information about various matters for Mr. Creel's committee, there being then no representative of the Committee on Public Information in France. All this I was to do in my halting French, which had not seen the light of day for four long pre-occupied years. I went straight to the Maison de la Presse. I saw one busy but polite gentleman after another. My hands perspired freely and my French halted more and more. Appointments were made for me to see other gentlemen, who would be at my disposal later. I was passed on with letters to other departments. I was vastly impressed by the politeness and desire of each gentleman to assist and co-operate, but it all went with a slowness and deliberation that appalled me, especially as, in my ignorance of war-time formalities, I had planned to leave Paris for Switzerland the following day. According to my instructions, I went to the American embassy to call upon Ambassador Sharpe, and showed him my letter of appointment, which said so plainly that he would be notified of my arrival and appointment. He had not been notified, but was polite and helpful in every way, giving me letters to the French authorities to facilitate my passport formalities. These formalities I went at with real American vigor.

They meant visits to the American consulate, to the French Prefecture of Police, and to the Swiss consulate, which had to be visited in the order given. The consulates were not open before ten o'clock in the morning, all three were closed between twelve and two and on Sundays and holidays. They were as far apart as the confines of Paris allowed, and at all of them you had to wait in a line. Especially at the French Prefecture of Police the waiting was long and tedious and the red-tape of unbelievable proportions, even with a letter from the American ambassador to vouch for my respectability and to ask for special courtesy and consideration. I have not read any adequate accounts of these dreary, fatiguing, time-consuming formalities, which were so much a part of traveling in war-times, but no literary skill could exaggerate their difficulties. With a diplomatic passport they were all avoided, or were looked after by embassy or legation employees and time was saved for a busy worker.

The energy which took me through it all in record time came from the desire, which had been waxing strong for many months, to work for my country. Switzerland was my goal, and no red-tape, even French red-tape, was going to delay me long. In three days I was ready to start and actually started! I had had my passport visaed in regular form, I had seen the courteous French officials of the *Maison de la Presse*,

LOOKING INTO THE LAUTERBRUNNEN VALLEY, WITH THE STAUBACH, FROM THE WENGERNALP RAILWAY





and had run to earth the information Mr. Creel wanted, though it had meant many interviews. But passport formalities and foreign business methods were not the only difficulties I had had to face.

The newspaper announcements of opposition in the State Department to my appointment and the failure of the diplomatic passport to arrive should have put me on my guard. Perhaps they had, but I was surprised when, the day after I reached Paris, I received a note from our embassy inclosing a copy of a cable¹ which had been sent from Washington to be given to me. This was the second stage of my troubles, and if you are going to follow my efforts to work for our country, I suppose, although it is very tiresome, it must be explained to you. The cable began by quoting from a communication which had been sent some days before from Switzerland by Mr. Hugh Wilson, chargé d'affaires of the American legation there, to the State Department in Washington. Mr. Hugh Wilson said that an announcement had been made in the Swiss press that Norman Whitehouse had been appointed to a mission in Switzerland for propaganda purposes. He said that the pro-German press of Switzerland was discussing this appointment unfavorably, saying that Switzerland wanted wheat, not words, from the United States. I learned later that the opposition,

¹Appendix III.

which appeared very considerable in the cable, consisted of a paragraph published in *La Feuille*, a paper printed in Geneva, strongly pro-German and commonly believed to be owned or financed by the Germans and reprinted in some of the smaller pro-German papers. Because of this opposition on the part of the hostile press, Mr. Hugh Wilson cabled that he considered it of extreme importance that he should be authorized to make a formal statement denying the intention of the American government to establish a propaganda bureau in Switzerland, and, since Whitehouse's name had been mentioned, it was important that he should not come. Thus would diplomats let our enemies' objections shape our plans. Why should any one have expected our enemy to welcome an effort to put the truth before the world? No suffrage campaigner would have! The Washington cable continued setting forth for my information the answer which had been sent from there to Mr. Hugh Wilson in Berne, evidently to give him the official announcement for which he had asked. It was that the untrue statements in regard to Norman Whitehouse's mission were doubtless based upon the fact that Mrs. Norman Whitehouse had been selected by a department of the United States government to visit France, Switzerland, and England for the purpose of studying conditions relating to women and children. The cable was signed, "Polk, Acting"

Secretary of State. Can you imagine how I felt? I was not sure at first what it meant. Could the object of my appointment have been changed without a word to me? No, it did not seem possible. On the other hand, the cable might mean that I was to do my work secretly under the pretense of studying the conditions of women and children. I did not like either solution! I had been so careful to provide that I should do only legitimate work of a certain kind in an official manner. It was strange that I should have made that particular provision, as if I had foreseen this very complication; and yet, in spite of it, here I was being publicly introduced as a student of the conditions of women and children, when I had started off to organize and direct simple government publicity.

Away in Paris I could not believe that Mr. Creel knew anything of this communication. I cabled immediately to him,¹ asking him to see the message which Mr. Hugh Wilson had sent from Berne to the State Department, and also the answer from Mr. Polk to Mr. Hugh Wilson, misstating the object of my appointment. I said I was confident that he, Mr. Creel, would insist that the State Department should cable corrections to the Berne legation and to the Paris embassy of the purpose of my appointment. I said my work was legitimate and that I refused to work under false pretenses. I ex-

¹ Appendix IV.

plained also in this cable that no previous announcement of my appointment had been sent to Ambassador Sharpe, as stated in my letter of appointment.

I learned later from both Mr. Polk and Mr. Creel that the latter had known of the message before it was sent. But he had other troubles to worry him by that time.

My memory of those few days in Paris is all a jumble of effort, discouragement, and homesickness. I saw no one I had ever seen before. There was no one with whom I could talk over my difficulties. In the suffrage campaigns there had been the vice-chairmen, the secretaries, and the treasurer and the chairmen of sections, and six thousand other officers! There was always some one of them with whom to consult and the talking over made everything seem easier. I haven't a doubt that if I had had a companion to discuss it with, the mere mention of the condition of women and children would have brought a laugh. As it was, I was as solemn as an owl about it all, and I felt very far away from home and friends. Quite late one night I remember lying in bed and turning over in my mind every homesick thought that a lonely person could conjure up, when along the street walked a man whistling, quite beautifully, "Home, Sweet Home." I turned my face to the wall and wanted to die!

But, instead, next night I went to Switzerland.

The hotel porter put me on the train, with my bags, gave me my tickets and instructions, and off I went. If you are an orderly person and had to travel in Europe in January, 1918, undoubtedly you could have done so more or less comfortably by making your plans several weeks in advance and obtaining a place in one of the rare *couchettes*, or wagon-lits. But I sat up that night with five other persons in a first-class French railway compartment. I had a corner seat, and, as it was before I had had one of my feet frost-bitten, I spent the night in comparative comfort.

Later, traveling in the French compartments was agony to me, because there is a piece of metal that runs down the middle of the compartments between the two rows of seats and that is the heating apparatus! You cannot sit on your foot very comfortably, because the seats are not wide enough, and you soon begin to feel cramped. The foot you are not sitting on has to rest on the heating apparatus. If you wear the kind of high-heeled, thin-soled American slippers that I have always worn and still wear, it becomes plain torture. I have talked about the method of heating to fellow-travelers, who sat with both feet firmly planted on the metal strip, and they generally seemed to think it satisfactory, although they said sometimes their leather soles were burned and then they didn't wear so long.

On this first night trip there were three men

and three women. But on my many subsequent journeys between Paris and Geneva and *vice versa* (I made about fifteen in all) I rarely met a woman. I was generally the only woman who sat in a crowded compartment with five men. Whatever the dangers are that lurk about women traveling alone at night, they do not exist in a French railroad carriage. Of course, I am a middle-aged woman, but I met only the greatest impersonal kindness and courtesy. I have been thrown with officers on their way back to the front after leave and on their way to leave. I have seen civilians on every sort of errand, and I have learned to love a Frenchman when he travels.

Each of my fifteen trips had a little different atmosphere, but in every one there was something of kindly human interest. There was the one when all the occupants were French officers going back to their particular sectors. One was an aviator. He was young and handsome and very merry, and insisted that we could each lie down if some of us would crawl into the luggage brackets. He wanted to talk all night. There was also a young artillery officer both of whose hands were bandaged. He was in plain agony and had little patience with the merry aviator. Every little while he would wake us all up and step over our feet to go into the passage to walk up and down. Then back he would come for a few minutes. He grumbled quite a lot to him-

self. I could sympathize with him because it was very hot on that trip, and my frost-bitten foot gave me an idea of what he must have been suffering with his hands.

On all the trips there was one similarity—there was the excessive heat and no air, and no Frenchman could be persuaded to let in any air. A draught was a thing to be forever dreaded. With few exceptions, all the men I met, even those who must have been living for years in the trenches, seemed to cling to their hereditary dread of a draught.

CHAPTER II

DIPLOMATIC METHODS

I ARRIVED first in Switzerland on Saturday morning, January 26, 1918. It wasn't an easy thing to do. Both a French and a Swiss frontier had to be crossed, luggage opened, and passports examined at the two frontiers. No letters or papers could be carried. At Bellegarde, the French frontier, everything seemed to be staged to make it all as alarming as possible. There was a huge barrack-like room, with a low counter inclosing a large space in the center. In this space the trunks and bags were placed. Outside of the counter the travelers who wished to go to Switzerland formed in a line to pass through various barriers and by numerous officials. Here they stood nervously and waited their turn. Each one looked distrustfully and suspiciously at the others. There was no spirit of helpfulness among them! The passports were inspected by one official after another with increasing severity. The first official, after looking over your passport, pointed you into a little, bare closet whose door was closed upon you and you did

not know what was going to happen. But this time it was only an examination of your purse, with many questions to find if you had any gold or coin with you. That was one of the forbidden things. The luggage came next. Bags and trunks were all opened. The examiners were mostly old women. The old woman who was examining mine discovered and clutched in her bony hand a package of letters, and away she went with them. There was more standing in line, and more examination of passports, and more barriers and gates to be passed, and an infinite number of prying, suspicious questions asked and answered. What was the Committee on Public Information? Was I a journalist? Oh, perhaps I was a reporter for a fashion magazine? All the reasons for your traveling had been written on your passport by the American and Swiss consulates, and the French Prefecture, but still the questions were asked and asked, and in an inconceivably severe tone. After I had patiently and industriously answered them all I was led for the second time into another little, bare, wooden closet, where again the door was carefully closed and I was left to wonder what on earth was going to happen now. I began to feel very much alone. But this time, also, it was nothing serious. It was only because of my package of letters. A door into an adjacent little wooden closet was opened and I was beckoned into an interview with a large, stout

French gentleman. He was the French Military Intelligence Officer, whose duty kept him for years at this dreary post, meeting all trains, seeing all suspects, forever on watch to discover his country's enemies, and to bear a big part of the responsibility of their coming and going to his country's harm. I have seen this officer many times, always courteous, always alert, and though I have never said more than a few words to him and have never heard his name, he is one of the men who have taught me to admire the way in which so many of the unspectacular, unheroic parts of the war have been carried out. When I first saw him there in the little cubbyhole he had my package of letters in his hand—letters of introduction to people in Switzerland—that was all. He was courteous to me and apologized for the over-zealousness of the inspectors, and off I went.

The train arrives early in the morning at Bellegarde. After you have been through the lengthy ordeal of getting yourself and your luggage through the French frontier you are hungry and exhausted enough to sit in the little station restaurant and enjoy a big cup of good, French coffee, and you forget to complain, even if there is no sugar. You hurry your coffee a little and rush to the train for Geneva. Between Bellegarde and Geneva your passport is examined aggressively at every stop. I've wondered what would happen to a poor traveler with a

faulty passport, when those whose passports were quite *en règle* are looked upon so severely. Later I was told what happened to one man, but I've never believed the story. It was that a distinguished American personage was traveling on this very line between Geneva and Bellegarde, and, becoming nervous, he denounced a fellow-passenger to the guard, and the man was taken off the train and shot. I think this story indicates more the nervousness of the people who lived and traveled in Switzerland during war-days and their readiness to believe and repeat any story than that the man was really shot. At any rate, there was no lack of vigilance on the part of either French or Swiss authorities. Every little trifle was guarded. On one occasion I had bought a Swiss paper at Bellegarde to read on the train, but was not allowed to keep it, even in the train when we crossed the frontier into its own home, Switzerland, where it had been printed a few hours before. On arriving at Geneva there was a repetition of the examining of luggage and scrutinizing of passports. I wonder if the journey from Germany across the frontier into Switzerland was made as difficult. Late that afternoon I arrived in Berne and went to what I had been told was the best hotel there—the Bellevue-Palace.

If Switzerland is conceded to have been an interesting place during the war, the Bellevue-Palace, from the international diplomatic point

of view, was held to be the culminating spot of interest. There the diplomats of all the warring nations met. There was the big red room where every one went for coffee after meals and for tea on Sundays, and there was the long dining-room, where at one end sat the representatives of the Central Powers to eat their meager Swiss meals and at the other end sat the representatives of the Allied Powers. Or that is the way it was supposed to be, but sometimes the competent Swiss *maitre d'hôtel* got people a little jumbled. There it was the fashion to talk in whispers about the simplest things, and look around furtively to see if any one was trying to listen. You would be told that the vaultings of the ceiling acted as sounding-boards and you couldn't be too careful, because some one at the other end might hear your most quietly spoken word. On the other hand, it was the fashion to say in quite a loud tone the things you wanted the enemy to hear, especially when the enemy began to retreat on the western front. I have seen grown men from enemy countries stand face to face in the door, blocking each other's way, each with the air of refusing to budge. I've seen grown men wear unaccustomed monocles in order to outstare the enemy. Fierce battles waged on neutral ground!

One sad thing there was to be seen each evening in that gay dining-room. It was a table of Austrian and German diplomats with

American wives—lovely young women, a credit in their beauty to the land which gave them birth. I have wondered, often, how they felt about the war; if they suffered because of the necessity to side with their adopted countries against the ideals of democracy. There they were with their foreign husbands, cut off from all communication with home and childhood friends, and even from the exchange of formal bows with their countrypeople. It was the convention on the part of the Allies not to bow or speak to the citizens of enemy countries, and a very wise convention, too, I concluded. The Germans and Austrians would have spoken.

I suspect that this dining-room of the Bellevue-Palace is going to figure quite extensively in war-time stories whose scenes may be laid in Switzerland. Every journalist and writer who came through that country seemed to feel that there was interest and romance there.

But I'm forgetting my story. When I arrived that Saturday evening at the Bellevue-Palace I found that Mr. Hugh Wilson, the chargé d'affaires in the absence of the minister, Mr. Stovall, was living there, but away over Sunday. I was disappointed not to see him at once. The next thing I did—I hate to confess to such frivolity—was to inquire very carefully of the hotel clerk if people dressed for dinner, and if the ladies wore hats or not. Of course, in Paris during the war you didn't dress. But at the

Bellevue-Palace, I was told, you did dress and you had your choice as to wearing hats.

I dressed. I don't remember about the hat. I went to the dining-room, and sat at a little table all by myself, and looked over the people I was later to know so well, either personally or by sight. While I waited there in Berne to overcome the obstacles placed in the way of beginning my work, I had a great deal of time on my hands, and I, who had been in recent years in the midst of a most active life, surrounded by numberless people—people I loved—found myself here alone in a strange country, with no friends and little work. Part of the discipline I imposed upon myself in the way of leading what I thought of as a "normal life" was to go to the dining-room and sit alone through meals at my little table, instead of eating on a tray in my room.

The Monday morning after my arrival I saw Mr. Hugh Wilson. I found him a young man, blond and serious-looking; a good type of American in appearance. When you heard he was a Yale graduate of 1906 you at once said, "A typical Yale man!" At this first interview I showed him my letter of appointment. This letter, you remember, announced that the State Department was cabling both the embassy in Paris and the legation in Berne, preparing them for my arrival. The embassy in Paris had not been notified, neither had the legation in Berne, so Mr. Hugh Wilson said. The only thing he

knew about me was that I had come to Switzerland to study the condition of women and children. Of this he had been notified officially, he said, and had given the statement to the Swiss press. He regretted he could not accept my own assertion that I was in reality the official representative of the Committee on Public Information, nor could he consider my letter of appointment as authentic. He took his instructions from the State Department. What they did not tell him he did not know. He acknowledged that a service of wireless or cable-news from America was being received by the legation, or had been; perhaps now it had stopped, he wasn't sure; but he was firm that even if it was still arriving, he could not turn it over to me to handle—to a student of women and children! He agreed to cable to the State Department for instructions, and he asked me to lunch to meet his wife.

The average American fortunately knows little about practical diplomacy and the traditions in which our professional diplomatic secretaries are trained. Their training excludes a knowledge or practice of simplicity and directness. They become experts in evasions and in the use of what they, themselves, laugh about as "diplomatic delays." They would judge it crude to say a "Yes" or a "No" and mean it. Months later, when my position was firmly established, one of our representatives in a moment of

friendly confidence gave me what he considered good, sound advice. "If you have anything important to say to a man, always be sure," he said, "to say it when you are alone with him; then if you want to deny it, it's only his word against yours." Another legation secretary, a young man who by family connections belongs to the innermost circle of our country's statesmen, counseled me, also after my position was established, to deny an agent I had sent on a dangerous and difficult mission. An inquiry had come to the legation as to whether the agent was reliable and the message authentic. He said: "Now is your chance. The message is delivered; that's all you want. Answer that the message is authentic, but say that you know nothing of the agent. Then," said he, "you will not be responsible for any unforeseen indiscretion of the agent."

You can imagine the obstacles I was to face, battling unassisted against such methods in a strange country, with my official position publicly denied by the United States legation.

The legation, with Mr. Hugh Wilson in charge, consisted at that time of the second secretary, Mr. Alan Dulles, a nephew by marriage of Mr. Lansing, the Secretary of State, and several other young secretaries. There were also the military attaché with two or three assistants, and Mr. Ellis Dresel, an elderly gentleman, a member of clubs, and a non-practising lawyer of

Boston, who was representing both the Red Cross and the War Trade Board. The young secretaries of the legation were all clever. They questioned and cross-examined me at every turn. They must know what I was doing. And I was at once surrounded by such vague misrepresentation and obstructions that I felt always as if I were moving in a thick fog. I remember many little incidents that wasted time and effort, but stirred my determination to clear the fog. For instance, in the first days, I wanted to meet a man in Geneva on committee business, and when I asked one of the secretaries for his address I was told: "Don't bother. We are in constant communication with him and we will make the appointment for him to meet you at the hour and place in Geneva you say." I appointed two o'clock at the Hôtel National the following Saturday. The arrangement was confirmed to me by letter. On arriving at the Hôtel National I waited and waited. The man did not come. I had then to find his address and run him to earth. It meant a delay of several days. Later, in comparing notes with him, I found that a message had been sent to him from the legation, not to his address, but in so circuitous a way that it did not reach him until long afterward. Another time, when I stood in the hall of the Bellevue-Palace with a telegram in my hand, one of the secretaries came and questioned me. I said I was arranging a

meeting with a certain prominent Swiss whom it was important for me to see at once. Until I had seen him, instructions I had received from Washington could not be carried out. The secretary told me in great detail that it was useless for me to try to reach him! He had been called the previous day on his military service and would not return home for three months, and no one knew where a man was when he was on military service in Switzerland. It happened that the telegram I had in my hand at the moment when these details were given to me was one I was sending, not to try to find the man I wanted to see, but one in answer to a note I had received from him that very day. Of course I became suspicious. This was the first incident of deception I could definitely lay my finger on, but I wanted to be sure. Was my diplomatic informant honestly mistaken or was he trying to deceive me? I questioned him carefully. "Just how do you know?" I asked. The diplomat himself had wanted to see him. "But when did you try? Perhaps he was away, but has returned?" No, no, it was only the previous day that the diplomat had tried. He was sure, he said, of what he told me. I said nothing of my own information, but I spent the following Sunday with the man in question at his country home. His military service for the year had been completed some time before.

One little incident of this sort followed an-

other. I grew to fear that something would go askew with my most carefully made appointment. It was a clever campaign of obstruction—very wasteful of my time and energy and calculated to be discouraging to any one who had not been trained in suffrage campaigns. In the good, honest air of America, looking back at it all, it seems incredible.

But from the diplomatic point of view it was necessary not only to obstruct my activities whenever possible, but to discourage me from continuing them. Had not Mr. Hugh Wilson, the chargé d'affaires, gone on record as to the great importance of "Whitehouse's not coming, since his name had been mentioned" in the Swiss press? That applied also in their minds to Mrs. Whitehouse even as student of the conditions of women and children. Since I had come in spite of their judgment, I should be made to leave as soon as possible and be rendered innocuous while I stayed.

There was one story our diplomats told with great glee, which inadvertently came to my ears, of a man who had been sent to help establish, I think it was, a depot of Red Cross material. When the man arrived he was looked upon with suspicion by the gentlemen already in charge, and for two months was kept on mountain-climbing expeditions out of the way!

Suggestions were made to me that I should go to Saint Moritz and wait for the long-delayed in-

structions from the State Department. I was told of the skating, dancing, and gaiety there, and even of a charming officer, who would make it his business to see I had a pleasant time. Perhaps I don't look as old and sedate as I am.

Obstructions did not discourage me; social gaiety did not tempt me. Could I be frightened away? I was told every thrilling story of spies that was known in Switzerland, of the dark dangers that always surrounded one, of the impossibility of guarding one's effects from prying, of how one man had found a spy in his wardrobe and another under his bed, of how the hotel employees, especially, could not be trusted. I was told of assaults. Every one had heard of the American legation employee who was attacked one night, when he was carrying some very secret and valuable papers. There were even stories of bombs. These spies would stop at nothing. They were absolutely unscrupulous. In trains, too, there were spies who would steal your secrets from under your very eyes; nothing could escape them. They seemed superhuman in their resourcefulness and courage—a race of Sherlock Holmeses. Of course, there really were spies in Switzerland, and I learned later there was a complication of them. First, and infinitely the most numerous, were the German spies, whose business it was to know and report what every one was doing, the more important of whom went from Switzerland into the Allied countries

and discovered military secrets and hatched defeatist plots among the soldiers and working-people. Of course, there were Swiss spies, too, to watch for other spies and protect Swiss neutrality laws. There were, also, undoubtedly, Allied spies, who were trying to guard us from the machinations of the German agents. That part of the system I did not consciously grasp at first, because the talk I heard was all of German spies. When I was told that the *concierge* of the Bernerhof Hotel, where I lived later, had been arrested as a spy I felt an unreasonable sense of irritation and enmity against this hotel. I gasped with surprise when I finally found he had been arrested as a *French* spy!

I was told that the German and Swiss spies would watch everything you did. You couldn't escape them. When they "had" you, you would be arrested. The arrest was certain, but the reasons were never clear to my mind. It was explained to me that any government work undertaken apart from the legation was against Swiss neutrality laws, and the penalty might be anything—it seemed not even short of execution. After a little time I was told that information had been received that I, myself, was being watched—followed constantly. In fact, I had noticed it myself, but I did not acknowledge it. I answered that I was not surprised; the attitude of the American legation toward me couldn't fail to invite it. The situation was

very dangerous for me, they said. But I remained calm.

Of course, I was interested in the stories of spies. I don't know why they should have a fascination for the most practical of people. I kept my eyes open for them. I even hid innocent papers in the most tempting places, but I must confess that never in the many months that I have lived in Switzerland did I ever find any trace of a spy in my hotel rooms. Elsewhere it was a different story, as I'll tell you later.

After a little time it seemed borne into the minds of the legation patriots that the student of the condition of women and children was going to stay and make every effort to undertake the work which she had been sent to do. Then came a campaign to persuade me that it should be done secretly. Every one told me there was no way of doing such work openly. There was much talk of the "delicate condition of Switzerland." Switzerland wasn't strong enough, it seemed, to stand a little authentic news of what was happening in a sister republic, under new and world-affecting circumstances.

All the Allied agents, moved apparently by a common impulse, began to advise me. I was asked to meet the members of one Allied mission at tea and solemnly warned, but not persuaded, of the dangers and impossibility of the methods I had proposed. Again an interview was arranged for me with a representative of another

Allied nation, who was looking after his country's interests in the approved subterranean fashion. One of our legation secretaries had whispered to me that this was to be a secret conference of great importance. It was rather suggested that I, being a woman, might well feel a thrill at being let into such matters. The secretary of the legation met me at a favorable hour, when very few people were about, and took me to the Allied representative's room. I had been asked if I would mind going to his room, and I had carelessly answered, "No." It happened to be his bedroom. The legation secretary, to my surprise, prepared to leave us to our secret conference. By this time I had been made suspicious of the simplest things. I thought I might as well guard against future attacks upon my reputation. I said I was embarrassed at sitting in a strange gentleman's bedroom, and proposed that we should have our talk in one of the great hotel drawing-rooms. Oh no! That wouldn't do. We might be seen—we might be overheard. So, although it was a bitter cold, dark night, we arranged to meet with the greatest secrecy on a bench under a tree in a near-by little park—a kind of platform that juts out high over the Aar Valley and faces the Bernese Alps. The snow lay on the ground and the bench was in an exposed position. When we met I was well wrapped up in a great fur coat, but I had forgotten to cover my satin slippers, and the wind howled

around my ankles. The Allied conspirator's teeth chattered. But there we sat and I heard again of the "delicate condition of Switzerland." I heard again of the network of spies; I heard once more that even with superhuman foresight and care, nothing, nothing could be kept secret. Everything in Switzerland was sooner or later discovered and known to every one else. And again I heard that it was of imperative importance to do things secretly. In fact, there was no other way. One would not be allowed to do them openly. And if one tried it and even succeeded, as far as the openness was concerned, it could only be a lamentable failure in results.

Once more, with my undiplomatic common sense, I came away wondering what on earth was the use of being secret when everybody knew everything anyway. But this gentleman was kindly and I believe he wanted to be helpful. He told me his own careful methods—methods of which I disapproved and which I would not use.

But to go back to my arrival in Berne, I seemed to be checkmated for the minute by Mr. Hugh Wilson's refusal to turn over to me the news service, the editing, translating, and distributing of which were to form one of my chief activities. At first I believed it would be a matter of only a few days before he received the instructions as to my status, which he said he was seeking from the State Department, and I

could begin my work openly. It did not seem unreasonable to wait a little and look over the situation. I spent two days in Berne making more or less futile efforts to disentangle a few simple facts from the confusion of many conflicting diplomatic statements, and then I paid my first visit to Zurich. As on all my later trips there that winter, in order not to waste time, I got up in the dark, walked to the station, had a cup of coffee there, and took a 5 A.M. train.

The walk from the Bellevue-Palace Hotel to the station takes you, first, through a narrow street for a block, then diagonally across a large square—the public market-place—to another narrow street arcaded this time. Why, I wonder, were properly brought up girl children taught, thirty years or more ago, that they should not go alone on the streets, especially in the dark? The result of that teaching has lingered with me yet. This first time that I took the early-morning train to Zurich I walked down the staircase of the hotel and across the big, deserted, dimly lighted hall as if I were a thief, and, before turning the swinging door into the street, I stopped a minute and shivered as I looked out into the dark morning. It was a very cold winter. I hurried, as I turned to the left, down the narrow street. I wrapped my cloak closer about me and pulled my hat down over my face and grasped my letter-case tighter as I came into the open square. What did I see there in the space so

dimly lighted by the distant electric lamps? The strangest crew met my astonished eyes. Was Switzerland the home of witches, as Holland is of storks? There they were in a row—six, seven of them, with their queer-looking brooms, advancing in a line, step by step, ready to mount and fly away. I wanted to run. Had my mind given way a little? I wondered. I went on, making a wide circuit, my heart thumping. No, they weren't witches—they didn't fly away—they were merely old, bent women, methodically sweeping the streets of Berne in the dark of a cold winter morning, before the happier inhabitants were awake. There they were, sisters of the hard-worked army of scrub-women who invade our own palatial office-buildings each night to scrub and work, while the daytime occupants eat and sleep. These are women whom the chivalry of men has failed to protect from heavy burdens. The old street-cleaning women of Berne gave me so bad a fright that first morning that, although on subsequent meetings we managed to exchange a "*G'n Morgen*," I always shivered when I passed them.

The train to Zurich was slow and lumbered along, arriving there about ten. Trains in Switzerland, unlike those in France, were insufficiently or not at all heated. Switzerland was dependent upon Germany for coal, and its supply was scanty and dear. Traveling was not a luxury.

My first visit to Zurich was an encouraging

one. I met and lunched with some of the French representatives, who seemed eager for my co-operation. I had heard that Mr. Harold McCormick was living there, and I went to see him, un-introduced. I knew he was well thought of and might be willing to help me. I explained my mission to him, and showed him my letter of appointment. I remember he asked me what were my relations with the legation. I told him their position. His simplicity and honesty impressed me. He took me to see Doctor Fuetter, the editor of foreign affairs of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, one of the largest of the German-Swiss papers, and left me to discuss with him the feasibility of establishing an office in Switzerland to give authentic news of America. Doctor Fuetter agreed that it would be of value. I went, un-introduced, to editors of other papers and presented the same proposition to them, and found them also interested.

I returned that evening to Berne and waited there a few days more for Mr. Hugh Wilson to receive his instructions as to my true status. They did not come as promptly as I had expected, so I went to Geneva for a short visit. There I was welcomed as a friend by Prof. and Madame William E. Rappard, to whom I had brought a letter of introduction from Mr. Creel. They live in a lovely house on the hills overlooking the Lake of Geneva and facing the great chain of mountains where Mont Blanc

reigns supreme. They took me into their household and made me feel at home. Later I stayed with them often and I don't know which is a pleasanter spot to recall, the terrace with the view of the mountains and the friendly approaches of their sturdy, small children, or Professor Rappard's library at the top of the house, where we often sat by the fire far into the night, I fascinated by his talk of world affairs. Professor Rappard is a young man—years younger than I—but the impression he gives is one of maturity and authority. Already he is recognized in his own country as a man of national influence and importance. He had been chosen as the head of a Swiss Mission to America in 1917, to arrange the terms on which Switzerland should receive grain from the United States. While here he won the regard of President Wilson, who saw him on several occasions. In Switzerland he was one of the few staunch and determined friends in public life which America had at that time. On his return from his mission he made a tour of Switzerland, lecturing upon conditions as he had found them here, and his lectures were the first attempt, that I know of, to present to the Swiss our side of why we went into the war.

My first week in Switzerland, with my trips to Zurich and Geneva and my patient efforts to meet and talk to people in Berne, confirmed certain general impressions I had brought with me.

It was undeniable that the entrance of America into the World War was a matter of vital interest to European countries. Yet neutral countries did not clearly understand our motives. They were asking what our coming into the war really meant and what its bearing would be on the outcome of the war. There was no one to answer their questions in our behalf. We had no established official or semi-official news agency to disseminate our news as Havas does for the French, Reuter for the English, Wolff for the German, etc. At that time our Associated Press and other agencies only gathered European news for American papers; they did not give American news to foreign papers. The questions being asked abroad as to America's aims and acts were left to be answered promptly, emphatically, and wrongly by the German news agencies and propaganda offices. The people of Switzerland, as well as the people of the Central Empires, were told that the United States had gone into the war to secure its loans to the Allies, to wrest from England its supremacy of the seas, to gain every kind of imaginary material benefit. At the same time it was explained that we had no army; if we ever organized one, we could not transport it across the ocean. If we ever could transport it, we could not arm it, and even if armed our soldiers would be so badly trained they could not face the unconquerable heroes of Germany. All this mis-

information and much more appeared in the columns of the daily papers and was circulated by means of pamphlets. A most extraordinary campaign of pamphleteering was at its height in Switzerland at that time. It had become a commonly repeated joke that a man's mail-box would be so crowded each morning with German pamphlets that all other business was driven to the wall. The Allies, too, entered into the game. The most rigid rule observed by both sides was that the pamphlets should be prepared with the greatest secrecy and delivered with no indication of their source. The only relaxation of this rule was when, on rare occasions, a Swiss could be persuaded to lend his name as translator to some speech or public document.

One evening, during my first visit to Professor Rappard's, the mail brought a pamphlet containing a translation of one of President Wilson's speeches. There was no indication of who had printed it or who was responsible for sending it. Professor Rappard looked at it and said, "Oh, anonymous—more propaganda!" That little incident convinced me more than ever of the folly of all the mystery and secrecy. President Wilson's speeches, which were not at that time published in full in the Swiss papers, were of interest to all the world. One of our Allies realized it to the extent of printing and circulating them secretly. I wanted to find out who had done it, but, so carefully were all traces hidden, that it

took some weeks and many efforts before I succeeded. Then when I said that the pamphlets would have carried greater weight if their authenticity had been vouched for by some recognized representative, I was again told how impossible it would be to do it in any but a secret manner.

In spite of the general feeling, I became convinced that my plan of open work would be successful if I could put it into operation.

CHAPTER III

THE VANISHING NEWS SERVICE

MY first step, of course, was to get hold of the wireless news service, but it was not to be an easy thing to do. I did not even know if it was now being sent to Switzerland. Mr. Hugh Wilson, you remember, had acknowledged at our first interview, when he refused to turn the service over to me, that the legation was receiving it. But he soon became uncertain whether it was still coming. Then after a day or two he decided that it was no longer coming. The reason that it had been stopped, he said, was probably because he had reported that the delays in transmission rendered it useless. He, trained in secrecy, untrained in publicity, thought little of it anyway. That service was like the vanishing Cheshire cat! Of course, if there were delays in its transmission, or if it was not being sent to Switzerland any longer, I should know why. So while I was still waiting for Mr. Hugh Wilson to find out about my status and receive instructions to let me handle the news service, I determined to go back to Paris and try to dis-

cover what the real facts were. On a two days' visit there I found that Mr. Hugh Wilson had been quite mistaken and that the wireless news service had not been stopped, but was being promptly forwarded from the Paris embassy to the Berne legation each day. The delays which, according to him, rendered it useless I found were not in Paris. Could it be that the Swiss censorship authorities were responsible for them? Or perhaps Mr. Hugh Wilson was again mistaken and there were no delays?

I also heard from the Committee on Public Information¹ that, in spite of the women and children story, there had been no change in my instructions, and that I was to institute my work as agreed upon.

This visit to Paris was pleasanter for me than the first, because I met some American friends. Captain David Gray, instead of the *concierge*, went with me to the station this time. The train for Switzerland left the Gare de Lyon in the evening at 8.25. The Gare de Lyon is a long way from the hotel near the Place Vendôme, where I stayed. I had discussed with the hotel *concierge* the problem of how to get myself and my bags there. He had said he would have a taxicab for me at 7.45. By beginning to look for it early enough, he was sure he could find one. Quarter to eight came, and still he stood in the middle of the darkened Place Vendôme, or

¹ Appendices V and VI.

walked down the gloom of the deserted Rue Castiglione toward the Rue de Rivoli; no taxi came. The Paris chauffeurs may have been eating, sleeping, amusing themselves, but they were not looking for fares in the neighborhood of the Place Vendôme on the evening of February 5, 1918. Time pressed. Captain Gray and I decided we could wait no longer. We took up my bags and ran for the Metro.—the Paris subway. It was very cold and underfoot it was icy and sloppy. I was wearing my little high-heel American slippers, and it was here that my foot was frost-bitten. I had not considered the chances of a frost-bite, and besides I had expected to go in a taxi. I did not know it was frost-bitten until I was in the train and it rested upon the heating apparatus.

On my return to Berne, as I had not yet become familiar with the full meaning of "diplomatic delays," nor with the determination of diplomatic representatives, I expected without fail to find Mr. Hugh Wilson instructed as to my true status and ready to drop the women and children story and to turn the news service over to me. Had not two weeks elapsed since he first cabled for information and had I not cabled my protest against working under false pretenses? And here I had come back from Paris with fuller information about the news service and with directions to institute my work as agreed upon. As yet no doubt of the good faith of any govern-

ment department had occurred to me. But I found that Mr. Hugh Wilson had not been instructed and I could not begin my work. I now started what was to develop into a lengthy and confusing interchange of cables with the Committee on Public Information in Washington.

The cables I sent there had to be put into code by the legation in Berne, forwarded by them to the State Department in Washington, and there decoded and paraphrased and delivered. No true copy of a coded cable was allowed out of the hands of the State Department or legation. It might have meant, they said, the deciphering of a very secret code. Even with the best intentions delays and mistakes are easy to understand under this system. It has taken as long as twelve days for a cable to reach me from Mr. Creel's department. This meant that our cables at times crossed each other and resulted in endless confusion. In addition some of the cables were so "mutilated" in decoding that their meaning had to be guessed at. Words never dreamed of by the sender were supplied perhaps by a weary and imaginative clerk. For instance, one cable I received in Paris solemnly assured me that my husband could get along. It was not until a year later that this enigmatic message was explained, when I went through the records in Washington and found that there was no mention of my husband—the phrase should have read tamely, "If at all possible."

The open cable, because of foreign censorship, was even more uncertain, and I had been instructed not to use it.

But time passed and answers, more or less intelligible, did begin to come to Berne from Washington. In response to two cables from me asking that Mr. Hugh Wilson should be instructed as to which one of us was to handle the news service, Mr. Creel cabled ¹ that I, not Mr. Hugh Wilson, was to handle it. I had known it, of course, but Mr. Hugh Wilson had not. Although he still maintained that he had not heard from the State Department, he became now, for the first time, officially aware of Mr. Creel's existence, and in transmitting this message to me he wrote ² that, in view of Mr. Creel's instructions to me, he was now ready to turn over the news service in case it was still coming to the legation. Again it threatened, like the Cheshire cat, to vanish! If it reappeared, he agreed to let me know.

Before I could take charge of the news service, Mr. Hugh Wilson not only had to find it, but I had to take an office and engage translators. I was living in one small hotel bedroom, already a confusion of trunks, papers, books, and clothes. I wanted, also, at once to find the cause of the reported delays and uncertainty in the receipt of the news service. My undiplomatic mind suggested to me that, since the delays were not in

¹ Appendix VII.

² Appendix VIII.

Paris, the next step to take was to go to the Swiss official who was in control of the censorship.

Professor Rappard had kindly given me letters of introduction to the President of the Swiss Confederation and other officials, but requested that, before the letters were presented, Mr. Hugh Wilson's explanation of my presence in Switzerland should agree with his and my own—that I was there as the representative of the Committee on Public Information. It seemed to me the time had come to present these letters. This brought about an interview between Mr. Hugh Wilson and me. He, too, saw the necessity of our statements agreeing before the letters were presented. He suggested that we send a combined cable to Washington, each setting forth his own view of the situation, and appealing to our respective departments in Washington to reach a conclusion there. I agreed to the suggestion and promised to wait a reasonable time for an answer before taking any further steps. This was February 8th. In his cable ¹ Mr. Hugh Wilson was very firm that if I "were a recognized emissary of the Committee on Public Information, I would be precluded from reaching relations with the editors of newspapers that would be of benefit to our cause." To his mind, if I openly offered American news, Swiss editors would suspect the news and distrust me, but the

¹ Appendix IX.

miracle of the "cloak" (women and children) would change all that. At any rate, he explained in his cable that I wanted to have the legation acknowledge my official position (not publicly), but in answer to official or business inquiries. To do even this, he pointed out, would place the legation in the position of acknowledging the falsity of the *communiqué* sent out over his signature, and the prestige of the legation would be injured thereby! In my cable¹ I said I found a demand for American news and was convinced that I could work openly with success, and protested that the method of working under the "cloak" of women and children, as advocated by Mr. Hugh Wilson and rejected by me, resembled the German method of secret propaganda, which we despised as dishonest.

This combined communication, as well as subsequent cables which I sent, brought many replies to me, but never did any answer, that I know of, reach Mr. Hugh Wilson from the State Department. Among other things, I was told by Mr. Creel in Washington: "Until arrival of Paris representative, suggest quiet survey of field without publicity." I had never wanted publicity except for American news. "Think it wise to wait before establishing office and presenting letters." I had already waited; I was still waiting. "Urge absolute harmony with

¹.Appendix_X.

legation." Yes, that was what I wanted, too, but how could it be? "Continue survey and unofficial contact." What did this mean for an official representative? I was told, too, that "Swiss situation is of extreme delicacy," and I was instructed to "avoid attacks on Germany." I had weeks before cabled to Mr. Creel about the severity of the Swiss neutrality laws. I had followed with breathless attention the trial of a Swiss art-dealer who had dared display some Raemakers drawings. I was contemplating no attacks on Germans or Germany! And again, February 19th,¹ I was told, "Let your situation wait until arrival in Paris of Kerney [director for France of the Committee on Public Information], when clear-cut decision will be made. Original instructions unaltered and President personally instructed State Department of his approval of our plans." When Mr. Hugh Wilson gave me this cable he drew my attention to the fact that my situation was "to wait," and he said he did not believe the statement about the President's approval. On my part, I wondered how, if I were to wait and wait, was I to follow the original instructions, which were unaltered, and begin at once to handle the news service? To this confusing mass of directions I answered, February 19th:¹ "Must have office to handle wireless service. Assume responsibility of taking one." Then followed repeated instructions from Washington to

¹ Appendix XI.

¹ Appendix XII.

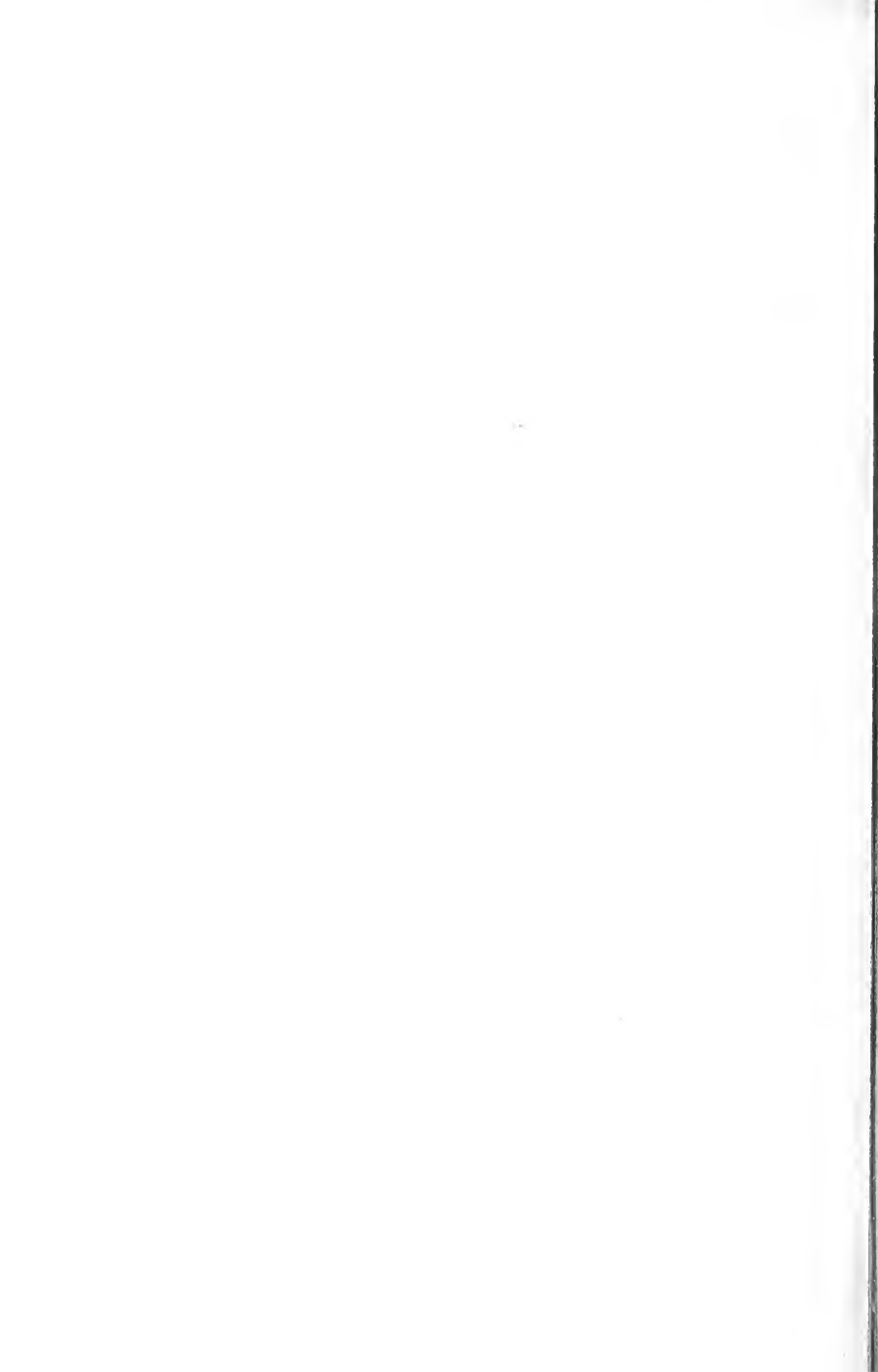
establish one "without formal announcement."¹ But it proved to be one of the things easier said than done.

From the first I had been looking for an office steadily and persistently, and now I continued with increased energy. Under the most favorable circumstances, it would have been a difficult job. Berne was then as crowded as Washington was during the war. It is a quaint little city with more than enough hotel accommodations to house its normal tourist travel and its usual number of official and diplomatic representatives. At the outbreak of the war the number of representatives of each belligerent nation increased enormously. I, personally, never knew anything about the size of the German legation with its associated offices, but it was common gossip that there were seven hundred, eight hundred, twelve hundred persons attached to it, the number growing as the war continued. These numbers, while they were probably exaggerated, certainly indicated a constant increase of activity. At least I know how it was with our own government representatives and employees in Berne. They increased fifty-fold during eighteen months. Practically all of these additional people were quartered in that little city. The question of finding an office became, therefore, a real problem. But I succeeded in discovering several places which were

¹ Appendices XIII and XIV.



THE QUAIN KESSLERGASSE IN BERNE, SWITZERLAND, WITH THE SPIRE
OF THE CATHEDRAL TO THE RIGHT



more or less possible, and three times I was on the point of closing a contract when my prospective landlord would demand a reference as to the legitimacy of the work I was to undertake, and I had no reference to give except the American legation. You can easily see that it was impossible for me to obtain an office. I then employed a Swiss lawyer, whose investigations confirmed my own opinions, that until there was a change of attitude on the part of the legation toward me I could not hope to find quarters. This man gave his time generously to my affairs and refused to the end to send a bill or receive payment.

During this period the American Red Cross had two vacant rooms in their office, at which I looked with longing eyes. I asked Mr. Dresel, who was then directing Red Cross activities in Switzerland, for the use of these rooms so long only as he did not need them. He evaded a reply. Then refused. Later, when a message came that the President authorized my work and thought I should begin, I again asked Mr. Dresel for the temporary use of those still vacant rooms. How I wanted them! But again he refused. Of course, he expected to need them himself shortly, he said.

It naturally took courage in a little place like Berne, where the atmosphere was so strained, for any one to help a person whose activities were frowned upon by the diplomatic representatives

of his country. Nevertheless, I had made some friends who were willing to help—but they were not among our countrymen.

Finally, an Italian journalist, who had a one-room office already overcrowded, offered me not only desk room there, but the services of one or more of his translators. But, in the mean time, other things had happened which made it necessary for "my situation to wait" and to wait.

I could guess at the complications in Washington, which were operating to make Mr. Creel's instructions to me so unsatisfactory. It seemed clear at the time and is even clearer now in looking back at it, a year and a half later, that the situation was somewhat as follows: Under President Wilson's direction, or at least with his approval, the Committee on Public Information had embarked upon its plan of establishing representatives in Allied and neutral countries to disseminate American news. I believe, from indications which cropped up here and there, that this plan from the first was distrusted and opposed by the State Department as an encroachment upon its own exclusive control of foreign relations and activities. The State Department must have feared conscientiously that delicate foreign situations would be imperilled by the activities of representatives not under its control and untrained in diplomatic traditions. The diplomats in Berne talked much of the ignorance of those outside their own circle. An unknown

detail of history or of court gossip would render a man, to their minds, unfit to transact any government business in a foreign land. No amount of intelligence or familiarity and experience with his own country's problems and point of view could compensate. Even the ambassadors and ministers not diplomats by career did not escape their scorn.

As to my own appointment, in addition to the general opposition, I was a woman! And Mr. Lansing, Secretary of State and the husband of a very active anti-suffragist, cannot be called a liberal man in his attitude toward women. The newspaper report of his opposition to my appointment, although it was promptly denied by him, was followed by rumors and gossip to the same effect which reached me through friends in Washington, even before I had left America. Such rumors continued to come to my husband's ears after I had engaged in the struggle in Berne. Also the failure of my diplomatic passport to arrive (diplomatic passports are issued only by the State Department), and the failure of the State Department to notify the Paris embassy and the Berne legation of my appointment as expected by Mr. Creel, the ridiculous story of the women and children, to which such prompt publicity was given in Switzerland, all seemed to indicate opposition to me, as well as to show a lack of co-operation between the two departments. The significance of these

incidents was enforced by the continued failure on the part of the State Department to instruct Mr. Hugh Wilson as to my true status in such a manner that he could become aware of it. As weeks passed, it became apparent that if Mr. Hugh Wilson really had cabled, as he agreed to do on my arrival in Berne, asking authentic information concerning me, he either spoke truly when he said he received no answer or he must have been confidentially directed to ignore my appointment and to obstruct my work. To a shrewd diplomat the very failure to receive an answer to such an inquiry would be tantamount to explicit instructions. To us here in America, it would seem very possible to overlook such matters as being unimportant, but during my experiences in Switzerland I was constantly surprised by the trifling personal questions to which in the midst of world events diplomats and officials could find time to turn their attention.

To support their conscientious objections not only to my plans for open work, but to all foreign activities of the Committee on Public Information, the diplomats were undoubtedly ready to avail themselves of all their weapons, and chief among them was "diplomatic delays." When, on February 8th, I accepted Mr. Hugh Wilson's suggestion that we send the combined cable asking our departments in Washington to agree there on instructions, more opportunities were given for delays and obstructions. To

these cables, as well as to his inquiry about my status, Mr. Hugh Wilson still protested that he received no answer whatever from the State Department, while the confused answers which came to me from Mr. Creel not only prevented me from going ahead, but gave further indications that a struggle was taking place in Washington as well as in Berne. Away from America, I did not know then of the relentless and virulent attacks which were being made upon Mr. Creel—attacks which were to continue with unabated violence throughout the period of his government service. When the war is well over and we are calm again we'll look back with amazement upon these public storms which raged about an energetic and patriotic official. A foolish, tactless remark he made about Congress in a small meeting in New York provoked a Congressional investigation in Washington. It was time stolen from the great and serious work of winning the war. In view of it all, it is not surprising that Mr. Creel, with his plans for foreign work opposed by the State Department, with his attention diverted by newspaper criticisms and cruel cartoons, with his time consumed by party attacks and Congressional investigations, with every minute overcrowded with the multitudinous demands of his fast-growing work, all hurrying him and buffeting him along—it is not surprising that he had to let something wait. It was my situation which was to wait—it was to

wait until perhaps there was a lull in the storm, when he could have another interview with the President, when a further decision could be made as to the case of Mrs. Whitehouse who was fretting so insistently in Switzerland under the blocking tactics of the legation or of the State Department.

But waiting in comparative idleness in Berne was the hardest sentence that could have been passed upon me. I had left my country, my family, my activities and interests, so absorbing to me, and all of my home comforts to work for my country in a strange land. I saw work crying to be done, and because it was not done I believed our country's interests and, in fact, the whole Allied cause were suffering. If I had found a way of overcoming the obstacles placed in my path, I might have proved insubordinate and gone to work in spite of the instructions to wait.

During this time of waiting I managed to live through the mornings in Berne pretty cheerfully. I read the Swiss and German papers assiduously and made mental notes as to the various journalistic styles, and planned my future work. Every day I hunted for an office. I would go to see and consume the time of a group of busy men whom I had met and liked—not American diplomats. It was the afternoons which were trying. I recall with strange vividness that I went day after day to my small north

bedroom after a solitary luncheon at my little table, and would rebel against my inactivity and think that the best thing in the world was a hard day's work. How I longed even for over-work with all its drawbacks. The hours of enforced idleness were so irksome that they must have seemed longer and more frequent than they were in reality, for, although it took two more trips to Paris and one to America before I was able finally to begin my work, I accumulated throughout the winter months of waiting a store of information that was to be of value and save time later. Under the conditions, the information was acquired with the maximum of effort and expenditure of time. In my morning reading I had become familiar with the Swiss and the German press. I found that, although official military *communiqués* and accounts of political events from all the warring countries were published in the daily papers, the Swiss press was under the severest governmental control. There was a double censorship of the foreign news: first on the part of the military authorities of the countries from which the news came, and second on the part of the Swiss authorities to guard against infractions of its neutrality laws. There was, too, a shortage of print-paper that reduced the greatest of Swiss newspapers to four tiny sheets. The double censorship and the shortage of paper rendered the news which did appear the merest outline of political and mili-

tary facts, excluding everything of a descriptive or personal nature. But such was the cleverness of the official news agencies and propaganda forces of the Central Empires and of the Entente countries that they contrived usually to give to the same bare facts a different coloring.

The newspapers of the Central Empires had a free circulation in Switzerland. In reading the enemy papers, reports of all events had to be discounted, of course, because of their natural prejudice and because of the government censorship, and of its carefully directed propaganda. Every word had to be scrutinized, every line watched in hope that some little item of unusual significance had escaped the watchful eye of the censor and some interesting fact could be developed from an innocent-looking phrase.

As in all cases of severe censorship, the printed news was supplemented by rumor. In Switzerland rumor flourished. Its swiftness and accuracy were marvelous. It outstripped trains. It was independent of the telephone and telegraph, which every one was afraid to use. Spies, you would be told, and you couldn't tell what kind of spies, would hear every word spoken on the telephone and read every word written in a telegram. Rumor is different from the social gossip with which we are familiar in this country. When or how it starts one does not know, but, true or untrue, after it has once started on its rounds each man and woman who passes it on

seems to feel a responsibility for its accuracy. The result was that in Zurich, Berne, and Geneva a rumor would be repeated in the very same words and phrases. These underground news channels conveyed chiefly political or military rumors, but occasionally were given over to gossip of a personal nature to add spice and human interest. Rumor probably flourished all the more because public meetings were looked upon with suspicion. Pamphlets, which, as I have told you, it was the convention to send anonymously, were distrusted, as all anonymous communications deserve to be. But because of the circulation of newspapers and because of this network of rumor from all countries, Switzerland became known not only as the world's center of war intrigue, but also as its center of news and information. It was considered so important as a news center that France and other countries maintained offices there for the sole purpose of reading and analyzing the enemy and Swiss press. The French office sent to Paris a voluminous report twice a day. Undoubtedly Germany kept as close a watch on news from our side. How I worried, during those months of waiting, that here, where news was gathered from all the world and sent to all the fighting countries, there were no American papers in circulation and practically no mention of American affairs, except such as Germany itself wished to give. Our official war *communiqué* did not start until

months later and was always remarkable for its brevity and for what it did not tell. Even after an American army was active on the front, its formula seemed to be, "Nothing of interest to report."

Here in the world's news center, in the midst of the conflicting countries, it seemed to me that we were cut off from the rest of the world. Through the obstructions of censorship and propaganda we saw only the dim outline of events colored and distorted; we did not see clearly in any direction; we could only guess at what was really happening in the world outside. I remember commenting once in Mr. Hugh Wilson's drawing-room upon this bewildering situation, and saying that even in America I had not felt so far away from the war as here, shut in behind the frontiers of Switzerland. Not at all, I was told, the war was very near; any evening with the wind in the right direction, if you went to the top of that near-by hill, you could hear the firing!

In addition to my interest in the news situation, I tried to familiarize myself with the Swiss magazines, technical and general, which had later to be reached with our feature articles. There were writers whose style and influence had to be studied, for to them should be sent special information about America. Since the pamphleteering was outworn, in what form would the information be of greatest value?

There was, too, the complicated question of the motion-picture situation in Switzerland. In what way could the cinema houses be wrested from the control of the Germans, who at that time had the firmest grip upon them and were using them in the most adroit manner, as a means of spreading their propaganda?

I spent time in preparing specific recommendations and a budget for my department. My efforts to obtain information took me to many of the Swiss cities and several times to Zurich, which is not only the largest city in German Switzerland, but was considered the center of pro-German sentiment. There I made friends with a prominent German-Swiss lady, whom I had met at a small meeting which had been arranged for me on one of my visits by Mr. Haguenin, the clever, *sauve* chief of the French *Maison de la Presse*. Mr. Haguenin had been for thirteen years before the war a professor in a Berlin university. He knew the general situation well and was trained in the diplomatic atmosphere. Perhaps that was why, from the beginning to the end of my efforts in Switzerland, he alternated between a real desire to be of friendly assistance to me, and a distrust of my methods and a fear of a lack of discretion on my part, which might precipitate some great calamity. The meeting he had arranged in Zurich was held at Professor Bovet's house. There were a few leaders of the rather backward Swiss suf-

frage movement, a few women pacifists, and one or two prominent women, such as my future friend, who were unconnected with any movement. These women had been asked to meet me, of course, as a student of the conditions of women and children. And here I might say how absurd my reputed mission must have seemed to the Swiss. I wonder they did not resent it. The condition of their women and children is in no way bad or peculiar enough to justify the appointment by a friendly nation of a special agent to study it.

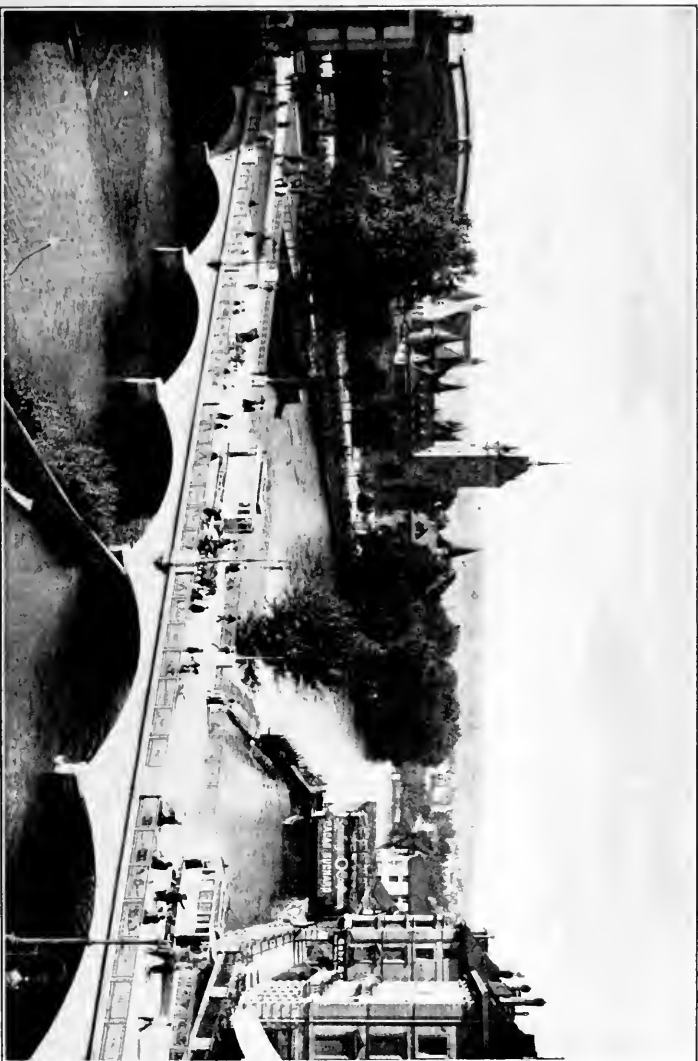
But since I conceived it to be my duty on every occasion to state the real nature of my mission, I explained to these ladies that I was not there to study the condition of women and children, as they had heard—that the original announcement had been a mistake—and I told them what my work was really to be, and they, too, as all other Swiss to whom I had spoken of it, became interested in it and approved.

A few days later I received the kindest letter from the lady of whom I have spoken, in which she even apologized for her boldness in writing, and asked me, since the hotels in Zurich were uncomfortable and crowded, to stay with her and her husband on my subsequent visits there. This was the beginning of a friendship that was to be of the greatest comfort and assistance to me and which I shall always value. Their house became a real home to me. Think of such kind-

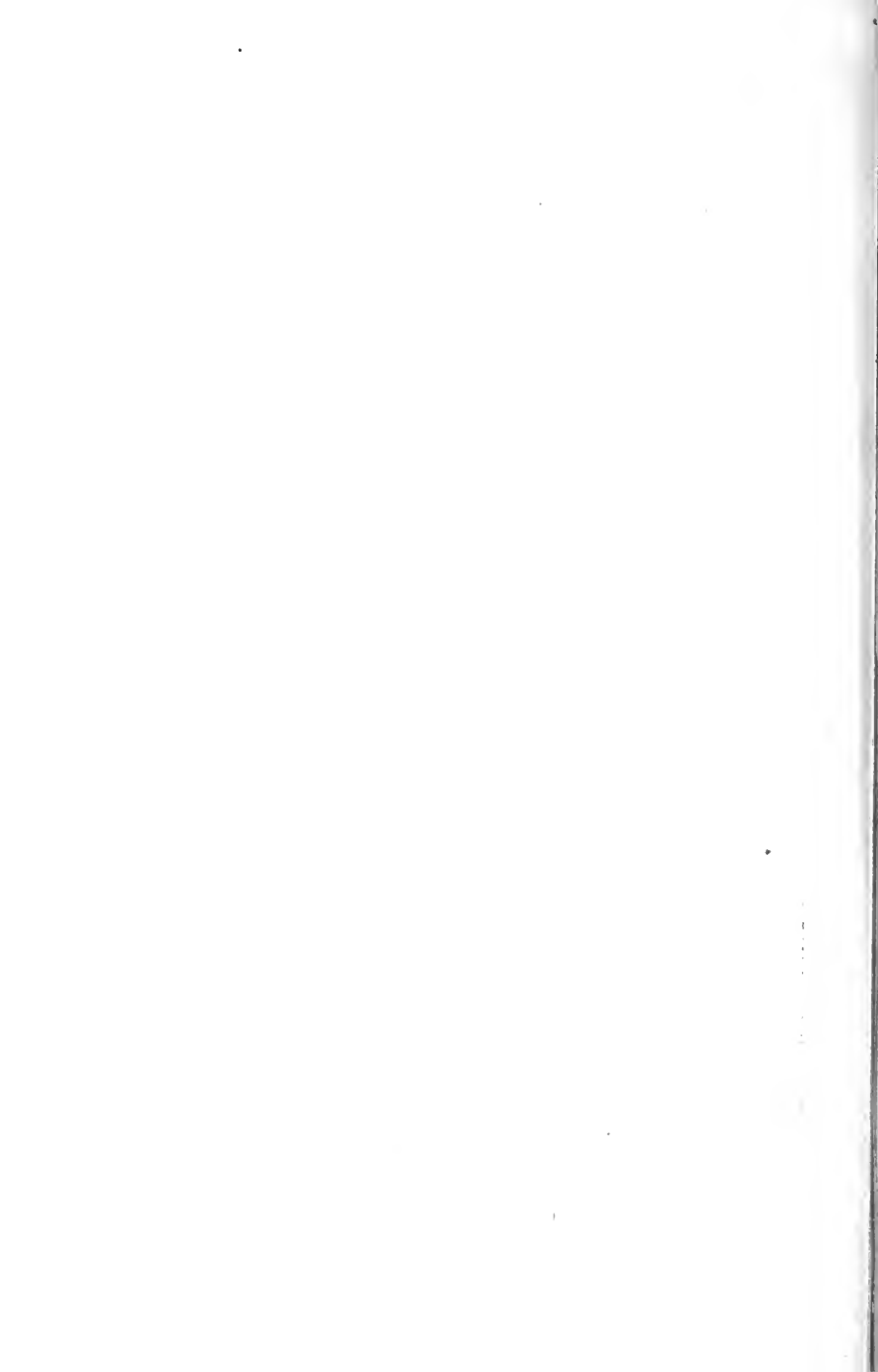
ness and hospitality to a foreigner whose position in Switzerland, the most sensitive and nervous of countries, was at that time thought to be doubtful. This Swiss family had many German connections and interests. Their attitude on the war was honestly neutral, as they believed it their duty to be. Yet they took me into their home and gave me good, sound, disinterested advice and, what I valued most of all, friendly affection. It is one instance only of the kindness I met on the part of the Swiss, especially in German Switzerland, which, at that time, was supposed to be so very antagonistic to the Allied side.

I needed all their friendship and assistance, because some of my experiences were really unpleasant. The first time I stayed with them was on March 5th. They had arranged to ask a number of prominent Swiss professors, writers, and editors to a little meeting at their house to discuss in what way they could help with my plans. When I arrived I found that there was difficulty about the meeting, which was scheduled for the next evening, and my friends were clearly disturbed. The people whom they had expected to come were refusing, one after another. My hosts must have begun to fear that they were harboring a spy—a criminal in the eyes of their country's law. They must have begun to regret their incautious, generous hospitality. On the morning after my arrival I

was ushered into a closed room for a conversation with them. Our interview might have been painful if they had not been so kind. They began to question me. They had to be discreet and not say too much. I admired their simplicity and honesty and, at the same time, their determination to really know what was at the bottom of the activities of this stranger whom they had seen only once before taking into their home. They spoke of the difficulty they had found in getting people to meet me. They said that there seemed to be some confusion about why I was in Switzerland—that there were reports from the American legation that I was not there for the purpose for which I myself said I had come, and that this laid me open to grave suspicion of attempting unauthorized and illegal work. I showed them my letter of appointment, and the articles on American affairs which had been sent to me through the legation pouch and which I had brought with me to offer to the Zurich papers and magazines. They went over this material carefully and conscientiously and found in it nothing suspicious; no violent or illegal attacks upon Germany, and nothing contrary to Swiss neutrality laws. Their advice was that I should at once obtain from the legation a letter stating that I was the representative of the Committee on Public Information, as I claimed to be, because, they said, Mr. Creel's committee was unknown in Switzerland as a



BRIDGE LEADING TO THE ZURICH RAILROAD STATION. THE SWISS NATIONAL MUSEUM IS SEEN ON THE
RIGHT-HAND SIDE, NEXT TO THE STATION



Department of the United States government, and, therefore, his letter of appointment meant nothing, while the legation stood for the sole American authority. Such a letter from the legation was all the more necessary because it was from the legation that the rumors which discredited me had emanated. They advised that I should attempt nothing further until I obtained this letter. Then they hoped I would return to Zurich and make their house my headquarters. They were very firm that the work I proposed to do would be of value, and equally firm against it being carried out under any false cloak or in any secret manner. I decided to cut my visit short and return to Berne at once. But since I was in Zurich, with several hours of government time to spend before the train left, I put it to use in calling upon some of the newspaper offices with my articles in hand.

On a previous visit to Zurich it had been apparent that I was being watched in the Baur-aulac Hotel by two large, aggressive-looking men. Again I thought that I was being followed on the street, but nothing serious happened and I returned on the evening train to Berne—depressed, but determined to increase my efforts to place my work upon a proper basis.

CHAPTER IV

APPARENT DEFEAT

IN Berne, next day, the members of the legation took a great interest in what had happened on my trip to Zurich; especially did the friendly wife of the chargé d'affaires come to my bedroom to ask why I was so depressed and what had happened. What had really happened—and our diplomats must have known of it even while I was in Zurich—was that I had escaped arrest. Later I was told in whispers, but not by our diplomats, that the Swiss authorities had been determined to put me under arrest if I undertook any propaganda activities. I have seen confidential reports to this effect. Now I am not particularly afraid of being arrested; in fact, I should have gone cheerfully to prison in Washington if I had thought it could have helped the suffrage cause. That I did not, was due to the fact that I entirely disapproved of the tactics of the militant suffragists and believed them totally unnecessary in America. But an arrest in Switzerland was a different matter. I should have hated it most heartily. It would have been

the evidence needed by the legation that I was an unfit person for tactful work. It would have served to prove that honest methods in such work were impossible. It would have ended my effort to work for my country. And think how it would have been used as an argument against the discretion and ability of all women for all the future. I can hear the anti-suffragists and anti-feminists explaining how, when a woman was sent to Switzerland to do simple, honest publicity work, she had behaved in such a manner that she not only had antagonized the American legation, but that she had got herself arrested by the authorities of a friendly country! It would have been more difficult to explain away than Miss Rankin's tears in Congress.

On my return from Zurich I, of course, immediately followed the advice of my Swiss friends and requested from the chargé d'affaires, Mr. Hugh Wilson, a letter vouching for my status as a representative of the Committee on Public Information. At this point, the minister, Mr. Pleasant Stovall, of Savannah, Georgia, was about to return from an absence of several months and take up his duties in Switzerland, and my request was referred to him. Mr. Stovall is a pleasant-mannered man, with "a certain use in the world, no doubt," but he does not like a woman in an official position and he thinks nothing at all of woman suffrage. He believed the fact that I am a woman, added to

the fact that I am a suffragist, would, in itself, prove an insurmountable obstacle to my doing work of value for my country. In addition, he was opposed to any activities abroad of the Committee on Public Information. We had a long conversation on March 8th. He refused to give me the letter I needed. I could obtain no assistance from him, except of a social nature. He made a great point of his willingness to entertain me. But I had not gone from New York to Berne to be entertained at luncheon and dinner by the American minister. At the end of our interview he asked, with the air of making some sort of a concession, that I should put in writing to him everything we had said. I am glad he made the suggestion. I have the letter on record.¹ My answer to his objections had been that I could not admit the validity of his opposition to the work of the Committee on Public Information, since it had the expressed authorization of President Wilson, but that if he would write out his objections to me personally and as a suffragist, I should be glad to submit them with my resignation to Mr. George Creel. My letter was never answered or acknowledged in writing—such are diplomatic cautions! The next day I was given a small scrap of paper on which was written in very faint pencil, almost illegible, the following message from the State Department in Washington to the Berne legation:² “The Presi-

¹ Appendix XV

² Appendix XVI.

dent sanctions Mrs. W.'s plan and believes she should begin work. Let her without formal announcement engage office, commence handling cable service, motion picture, and other work." At last the State Department had become aware of my appointment as other than a student of women and children. I was delighted. I thought I could begin my work at once. It was now that I asked Mr. Dresel for the second time for the temporary use of the vacant Red Cross rooms and was refused. But I was not discouraged. I accepted the offer of the Italian journalist for space in his one-room office. I bought furniture and moved it in. I engaged a translator and a secretary and I registered a code address. I was going, with all my stored-up energies, to begin to work for my country. I thought the obstructions I had been meeting were to end at last. And with ordinary citizens they would have, but not with the diplomatic representatives of the Berne legation! I had another interview with Mr. Stovall and found he was as determined as ever in his opposition. He refused again very positively to give me a letter vouching for my position. He refused to acknowledge or answer the letter I had written to him at his own request, but he asked my agreement to consider it as never having been written. It was then my turn to refuse. I thought it wise to let it stand. He said he would cable to the State Department for further directions, which

meant only more obstructions and more diplomatic delays!

Just at this time I received a cable from Washington telling me to go to Paris to confer with Mr. James Kerney, the representative of the Committee on Public Information, who finally had arrived there. It was a propitious time for a second absence from Switzerland because my efforts to work there were still blocked by Mr. Stovall's refusal to give me the letter I needed. Without it there was only my unsupported and disputed word as to my true status, and without it I felt I was not even free from the danger of arrest. I left Switzerland March 13th. It was on this trip, the night of Wednesday, March 13th, that the most unpleasant experience of my whole career took place. I have never liked even to speak of it. Of course, I realize that there is nothing really humiliating in being shut into a little closet by the custom authorities of a strange land and being stripped of your clothes—almost entirely—when you are merely traveling alone in the peaceful and orderly pursuit of your duty to your country. I believe I have even more than the ordinary amount of courage, but when, after I had presented my passport for examination to the Swiss officials at the Custom House in Geneva, I was brusksly told to "Come this way," and led into that little closet, my heart sank. Again I felt^{ed} very much alone. There was nothing to

do but submit calmly. I talked to the woman who conducted the formalities. I asked her if many women were examined, if they made objections. I found there were few, that sometimes they became hysterical, that they did smuggle things even in their hair. I asked if the examiner herself did not dislike the performance of her duties and she said she did, but times were hard during the war and she had to live. The only thing the careful inspection of my clothes and me disclosed was the receipted hotel bill, which I had paid ten minutes before and hastily stuck into my coat pocket. This experience was one of the many difficulties I should have escaped if my passport had been a diplomatic one, as was promised to me at the time of my appointment, or probably if the attitude of the American legation toward me had not aroused the suspicions of the Swiss authorities as to my standing.

As annoying and distressing as my own experiences were, they sank even for me into insignificance and became very unimportant indeed in comparison with the momentous world events of that period. While I was waiting in Berne I read in the daily papers and heard rumors of such things as the great threatened strike in Germany and Austria from which the German Liberals, exiled in Switzerland, hoped so much. At the best it might mean the immediate overthrow of the Kaiser's government. But it was

doomed to failure. In Austria it came prematurely; in Germany, it was suppressed severely. This was the time, too, of the Russian *débâcle*, of the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, and of the final signing of the German peace treaty there. It was now that the Germans began to boast daily of how the wheat from the Ukraine would feed their people, while the rest of the world starved.

Although rumors in Switzerland were concerning themselves chiefly with such things as the unfavorable conditions in Austria, the lack of clothing, food, and supplies of all kinds, the outbreak of epidemics, and with the chance of Bolshevism proving a two-edged sword in the hands of the Germans; on the other hand, they made one grave by suggesting perilous difficulties of a social nature, revolts, even revolutions in France and in Italy, difficulties which fortunately never developed. But apart from rumors, the situation as it was openly known was bad enough. The official military reports from the combatants on all the fronts became each day more disturbing for us. It was not only in Switzerland, but on my trips to France, that my own little problems shrank to ever more puny proportions. No one could have remained self-absorbed in Paris in the months of February and March, 1918. It was a time when general discouragement could be understood, when a distrust in America's ability to send help in time to be effective could

be excused, and when admiration for the determination of the French to make every final sacrifice and hold out to the very end, was mixed with a fear that they might not do it. Streams of people were leaving Paris in taxis, in cabs, in wagons, in any sort of vehicle obtainable, and were to be seen walking in single file, as it seemed to me in recalling these scenes, toward all the stations, with their boxes and bags carried by themselves or by porters. Otherwise the streets had a vacant look except for American officers. The houses and shops seemed deserted; the windows of the latter were strangely ornamented by protective strips of paper pasted on in geometrical, designs. The public monuments were being covered with the greatest leisureliness by sandbags moved slowly one by one, by a handful of the superannuated men, too decrepit to fight. The German airplane attacks were constant. The advance of the German army was threatening.

I was in Paris on the Sunday of the great explosion which took place in a near-by munition-plant and seemed to shake the city to its foundations. I wondered at the huge, widening column of smoke that rose straight and steady to the sky. On this day the American Red Cross won particular praise and admiration from the French press. They were on the scene instantly, transporting and caring for the wounded without fuss or red-tape.

As to the airplane attacks, my blood was curdled many times by the shrieks of the sirens on the motor fire-engines, which dashed through the streets of the city to warn of approaching danger. This warning noise itself seemed to be chosen as an invitation to hysterics. When it was heard, I have seen the people on the streets dart away in flocks to some near-by shelter in a formation like birds startled from a field. But I have sat at dinner at the Ritz through an attack when only the waiters showed any uneasiness. I heard much of the cellars prepared as refuges, but never saw one. I have lain in bed through several raids, too tired and comfortable to seek a shelter; and the first time mistook the great deafening noise of the protective anti-aircraft barrage for the dropping of enemy bombs and wondered if the entire German air-fleet had not been sent this time to demolish Paris completely in one great effort, so constant and unremitting seemed the explosions.

I was in Paris the first day of the attack of the big gun. In the early part of the day it was believed to be an attack by airplanes, and, looking overhead, there were airplanes to be seen circling around in the sky. Were they German or were they French? It was impossible for a mere observer on the streets like me to tell. Then rumor—that strange thing—began to run about and say that the great explosions which came at such regular fifteen-minute intervals were not

from airplanes. What could it be? Were the Germans really at the very gates of Paris and bombarding the city? No, it could not be that, said the wiseacres. A bombardment from near at hand would be quite different. In just what way it would be different I could form no clear conception. That day especially there was a stream of people moving steadily toward the railroad stations. I walked to luncheon with two young Americans of the Red Cross, looking at it all. When we were on the Rue de Rivoli, a bomb or shot or whatever it was struck the Quai d'Orsay across the Tuileries. The noise was shattering. I felt as if that particular shot had singled me out and gone through the back of my head. One of the young men with me started to run. He did not know whether he was going toward or away from the noise, but he felt it was the moment for action. The other young man crouched upon the pavement, his head low and his knees wide apart. He looked so funny that, in spite of my throbbing head, I laughed. He had been to the front and had been told that was the thing to do. We found the restaurant deserted and the service disturbed. After luncheon I walked on the boulevards and was struck by the crowds of people who were standing about unprotected outside—not inside—the subway entrances, which were used as shelters. That day I was trying to have my passport visaed for a return to Switzerland.

All public offices were closed during a bombardment. When the sirens had sounded the end of the attack, I hurried to the Prefecture of Police, found it open, and was surprised by the haste and total lack of red-tape with which, for once, business was despatched. The officials gave me little attention. They were talking to one another of the report that the attack was by a big German long-range gun. The afternoon papers had an account of it. What was going to happen next? No one could tell.

It was on this trip to Paris that I first met James Kerney, the director for France of the Committee on Public Information. He was so friendly my heart warmed to him. He wanted to help with all the details of our work together. The contrast with the attitude of the American representatives in Berne was almost overwhelming. I did not have to seek hidden meanings behind his words, nor dread a desire on his part to deceive. There he was—hawk-nosed and dark-browed—a warm-hearted, generous Irishman who could sit and talk by the hour in glowing and picturesque terms on any and every subject on the face of the globe. His talk was full of wisdom and humor, but I sometimes thought, in my hard and practical way, that he talked when he could have been working.

He had his own difficulties. He did not speak French and some of the diplomats in Paris criticized him on that score. Diplomats always

speaking French. He owns and edits a newspaper in Trenton, New Jersey, and had never been abroad before. Some of the diplomats talked of his lack of suitable experience. Mr. Kerney admitted there was something on their side. There was a great difference, he conceded, between Paris and Trenton, and you noticed it more in Paris than in Trenton, he thought.

He was as shrewd as he was kindly in his estimate of people. Once during a discussion about President Wilson's character, when the question arose and grew animated as to whether he was a cold-blooded politician or whether he was a great man with warm, human feelings, Mr. Kerney decided the point. "Yes, he is a great man," said Mr. Kerney, "and as to his feelings, he is very warm-hearted—steam-heated, it's true," he added. He loved to laugh, and we laughed together over the "women and children" story, and the other trying and fantastic experiences I had had in Switzerland.

The first day I saw him he had just returned from a motor trip to the front and was full of all he had seen. There were many things I should see, too, and many people I should meet. You see, he wanted to share everything! So while my own attention was really fixed upon such dry-as-dust subjects as still photographs and motion pictures and the daily wireless news service (just where was the spot at which it arrived in Paris? And what was the quickest way to get it to the

embassy and off again to Switzerland?) he, in the midst of establishing his own office and getting to work, found time to arrange meetings for me with journalists whom he thought interesting, and with army officers and others who were in charge of activities related to mine.

Every day on this visit I went to the Pathé Frères' motion-picture factories at Vincennes or Joinville, inspecting, titling, and working over films which had been sent to Paris to be prepared and forwarded for use in Switzerland. The way for me to Vincennes and Joinville was long and tiring. Captain David Gray, who was then in charge of the photographic division of the Signal Corps, with headquarters at Vincennes, would go there with his assistants quickly and comfortably in an army motor. But I could not go with them. There is a rule or regulation which prohibits women from riding in army motors. Have you not heard men object to woman suffrage on the ground that it would kill chivalry? Have you not even heard them say that women might have to stand in the street-cars if they voted? Well, my right to vote had nothing to do with the fact that each morning I would take the crowded Metro. and stand to the end of the line and transfer to suburban surface cars, which finally, after a change or two and after wandering and jerking through forests and the countryside, would deposit me a short walk from the Pathé factory. The trip each way took from an hour

to an hour and a half, and the time spent fretted me enormously. But so tame are we women still, that at first I accepted the absurdity of the situation without a thought. Here I was doing what might in old-fashioned manner be called a man's work, but without the facilities and comforts which the humblest and least busy of my co-operators enjoyed. One night it struck me with full force, and my feminist soul revolted. I lost a night's sleep as a consequence and held forth the next morning about it to Captain Gray. He, too, is a feminist. The following day I went to the factory in his motor, on the plea that I was not a woman, but a United States official. But in spite of the waste of time, I am glad I was forced to take those long rides in the surface cars and the Paris Metro. I was filled with admiration for the French women guards, motormen, and conductors, whom I saw so constantly. They seemed the best type of worker—man or woman—I had ever seen. They were well-built, deep-chested, thick-bodied women, strong through and through. They were serious and business-like, almost stern. But even the hard business of living and working in war-time had not deprived them entirely of a French-woman's coquetry. Their neat uniforms were worn smartly and their little caps were placed at a becoming angle on their black, tidy heads.

On one or two of the trips to Vincennes and Joinville, Mr. Kerney accompanied me in a taxi.

In those days it was a triumph to find a taxi that would consent to take you in the direction you wanted to go. But it was a triumph without much satisfaction, because the taxis were old and very jolty, slow, and uncertain. I remember a trip back to Paris in a taxi of an extra-small size. A very fat French officer who had been detailed to help us in our work drove with us. With true French politeness he insisted that Mr. Kerney and I should sit on the back seat, and then, to my wonder and alarm, he placed his mountain of flesh on the little seat which lets down. He was very voluble and very entertaining. He spoke no English and Mr. Kerney spoke no French. He told us of the early days of the war and of the great slaughter at the battle of the Marne in the time of open warfare, before the French had had time to intrench or to do anything but meet and stop the enemy. Mr. Kerney, his Irish volubility outmatched by the Frenchman's, would fidget and ask, "What is he saying now?" I'd translate hastily and listen at the same time, while the French officer talked on and on. We passed the fort of Vincennes. There, he told us, he had been stationed after the first summer's fighting. There's where the spies were shot. Any morning at daybreak, even now, he said, you could hear the shots and know that one or even a half-dozen of these men had met their fate. He himself, when stationed there, had had charge of the firing-squad and had given

the commands which shot them dead. Yes, a great number, he said, had been executed under his orders. I have told you that I particularly dislike spies. I accept the fact that execution is an inevitable way of dealing with them when discovered in war-time. But I looked at the green embankment and I pictured the scene at daybreak, and I must have thought of the spies as men who clung to life, with women somewhere who loved them and who would wait and wait and perhaps never know their fate. I must have thought how hard it was to meet death in that manner, walking up to a certainty of it—not like taking your chances with your comrades in a battle, not even like dying at the end of an illness with lowered vitality, not even as if there were some one to take a last message, but an inevitable hard fate to be met alone. And there against that soft green hillside at daybreak on a morning, steel-gray and cold, such as this had been when I left the Place Vendôme, these men had been shot to death. I could not have been thinking of them as Frenchmen who had betrayed their country for money, or as Germans ready to commit any atrocity, but merely as human beings who lived and loved more or less as others, who had dared a little more and had been caught. I looked at the kindly, fat French officer and thought how conscientiously the cruelest war duties had been performed. He had given the command for a great number to

be shot dead, he had told us. I said to him, "I'm sorry. How terrible for you!" "Oh, not at all," he said. "It is the simplest thing. They stand with their backs to the embankment. They can fall only one way. They waver a little and fall on their faces." And he showed with a gesture of his hand how it was done. "That's all," he said; "it's very quiet—it's not terrible at all—*pas du tout*." Mr. Kerney fidgeted. "What was he saying?" he asked. "What is he telling you now?"

Here in Paris while I was working over many little details, the cable correspondence with Washington kept up. I had come from Switzerland annoyed because my work was being delayed by what seemed to me the merest petty obstinacy on the part of the minister. I had left instructions with my newly employed secretary in Berne to have everything in readiness for me to start work in earnest on my return, because I still believed, even after my two months' experience, that now at last the obstacles were about to be removed. Mr. Stovall had said he was cabling for further instructions, you remember, even after the receipt of the cable saying the President sanctioned my plans and wanted me to go to work. I believed instructions would come again to the same effect, and the second time Mr. Stovall would have to accept the decision. But the first cable that reached me in Paris from Mr. Creel was a shock. Mr. Stovall

had been cabling, evidently, about my wanting a letter from him, but had neglected to say why I needed it. Mr. Creel's cable¹ dated March 15th said that the Berne legation promised me all unofficial aid and attention, but that the minister objected to the issuance of a letter recognizing me as the representative of the Committee on Public Information. This attitude Mr. Creel seemed to uphold. His cable continued, "You have my letter of appointment, and I prefer work inaugurated without connection with the legation or indorsement by it." So did I. I wanted no indorsement by the legation, but I wanted no further damaging misrepresentations by it, either, and to insure that end I needed the letter. My answers tried to explain the situation:² that I could do no effective work in Switzerland with the legation blocking every step, and I cited the incident of the previous week in Zurich, when I had been near arrest. I explained to Mr. Creel why his letter of appointment was insufficient. I explained that the minister had offered me every *social* attention, but that my desire was for serious work and not to be entertained. I said, belligerently, that I had gone to Switzerland to fight Germans, not American officials. I complained that Mr. Creel's cable of March 15th, in my opinion, did not uphold me, but would confirm the legation in their hostility toward my work, and that I

¹ Appendix XVII.

² Appendices XVIII and XIX.

believed it was impossible to achieve results under such conditions—therefore, I resigned. I asked for instructions as to disposition of accounts, etc., and said I would return to Berne to close affairs.

It had been a long struggle. Mr. Creel, I believe, had done his best to retrieve the mistake of the women-and-children announcement into which he had been driven. He probably had taken the question several times to the President and had obtained his "sanction" to "Mrs. W.'s work," and his instructions that I should begin. It must have been very irksome to him to carry on this struggle in the midst of Congressional investigations and of all the storms that raged about him in America. My resignation must have brought a sigh of relief. One storm center, at least, was to disappear. But what about having this woman back in America? She was chairman of the largest and concededly best-organized single organization in the country. The New York State Woman Suffrage party had an enrolled membership of more than 1,015,000 women. Would she have grievances? Would she talk? She had the ear of the press and the public in New York State. Would she add to the general difficulties which encompassed the much-harassed Committee on Public Information? Perhaps she had better not come back. Besides, she is a hard worker and has ability, and good workers are needed to organize the

work in Europe. She has had a rough deal in Switzerland, too. For her own sake, also, it would be a pity to let her come home with a record of failure. Yes, it is only fair to let her stay in Europe. Kerney wants help; he has been cabling for it.

It's my guess that some such fears and some such reasonings were responsible for the cables from Washington that followed. Answering quickly my cabled resignation came this message from Mr. Creel:¹ "While perhaps not advisable for you to return to Switzerland, consider you so valuable to our work in general that we wish you to please stay in Paris and co-operate with Mr. Kerney pending further instructions." I considered this the acceptance of my resignation and prepared to return to Berne and end my activities there. I cabled: "Doubt possibility of remaining in Europe. Will send decision upon returning to Paris from Berne, after I have received definite instructions." No more blind acceptance of government work for me! Next time everything would have to be explicitly defined and understood!

I left that night, March 23d, for Berne to pack my trunks and close my affairs. It was the day of the attack on Paris of the long-range gun, and I finished with my passport visas just in time to catch the train.

In Berne, at the moment of abandoning my

¹ Appendix XX.

post, I found everything established in the office of the Italian correspondent and ready at last for me to go to work. I offered Mr. Stovall a final opportunity to change his mind and give me the letter I needed. He would not. My passport formalities were extraordinarily facilitated by the legation, and in two days I was ready to leave.

CHAPTER V

TO AMERICA AND BACK

THERE were a few little incidents of interest about my leaving. One was that Professor Bovet, a leader of Swiss opinion, came in behalf of a group of influential Swiss in Zurich to urge that I remain and carry on my proposed work. Rumor had reached them that I was going. They were ready now to give active assistance. I did not consider their request, although on the strength of it I might have reopened the cable communication with Mr. Creel. But I felt it would be a waste of time. I had come to the conclusion that a trip back to Washington would save time in the end, if the difficulties were to be settled at all.

Another incident of interest was that the secretaries of the legation gave me a farewell dinner! They must, indeed, have been glad to see me go, or perhaps they were more human than I thought and were a little sorry that it was I they had had to oppose, or perhaps they considered me vanquished and were generous. Or the dinner may have had no particular signifi-

cance, because from the day of my arrival in Switzerland, all during the time they were trying with the greatest adeptness and unscrupulousness to obstruct my efforts to work, they had made social advances to me. They had asked me to dine and to play bridge with them and to go to all of their parties.

At my first interview with Mr. Hugh Wilson, when he told me that he knew me only as on a mission to study conditions of women and children, and refused to accept my own solemn assurance that I was in reality the representative of the Committee on Public Information, he asked me to lunch to meet his wife. This attitude never ceased to surprise me, but it was true diplomacy, of course. Once, I heard Mr. Stovall tell with admiration of a foreign diplomat who, whenever he contemplated a particularly treacherous act against a man, would treat him with all the greater courtesy and social consideration. Mr. Stovall did not, of course, mention the ugly word "Treachery." Ugly words as applied to conduct one admires are not in a diplomatic vocabulary. I have told of the emphasis he had placed upon his willingness to ask me to luncheon and dinner.

I had accepted the invitations of the secretaries often; in the beginning with the hope that I could overcome some of their prejudice and because until toward the end I did not completely realize the character of their opposition.

When I did realize it I found it possible but very distressing to separate these young people in their kindly attractive social hours from themselves as my implacable, unscrupulous enemies.

When I dined with them and played bridge with them, I liked them. I enjoyed the companionship of my own countrypeople. What they felt for me, I don't know. I think diplomats do not allow themselves simple or human feelings. They are ambitious. They must get ahead and make good records. They must obtain and send back to Washington useful information. They must carry out instructions from the State Department and at all costs maintain the supremacy of their own department.

Our diplomats in Berne probably sought my society from mixed motives. I might be diverted from my efforts. It was also necessary for them to keep in touch with me and know what I was doing. How could they block it otherwise? It was to the second secretary of legation that fell the particular task of keeping an eye on me. He is a young man with a distinguished, studious air, whose ruling quality is caution. He it was who told me many of the spy stories, who had wanted me to go to St. Moritz; and whenever I drifted a little away, it was either he or Mr. Hugh Wilson's friendly wife who would ask me to a meal.

The situation was absurd, and it brought about amusing and annoying incidents. Al-

though all the legation members were seen freely and publicly in my society, they would not allow a legation messenger to deliver to me any of the parcels of literature which were sent to me by the Committee on Public Information through the diplomatic pouch. To get them—and they were heavy and cumbersome to carry—I had to go myself to the legation, because if anything should be sent to me, it might be construed by some one—by whom, I don't know—perhaps a hotel clerk or a German spy—as a recognition on the part of the legation of my official position!

The second secretary took great pains to arrange the farewell dinner. Several new members of the legation staff had arrived recently, and they, too, joined in the feast. It was very charming in the gay dining-room of the Bellevue Palace, at the table just to the right of the door as you go in. There were flowers and extra courses chosen with extreme care and obtained with difficulty, because of the food rations. I, the guest of honor, was late. Diplomats make a point of being punctual. I was leaving Berne early the next morning for America, but the packing and confusion attendant upon a hastily decided departure had nothing to do with my lateness. Just as I was leaving my room punctually, I had been given a letter written by my chief host, the second secretary. This time it was official and it was rather long. I wish I had kept it so that I could quote from it for you. It was

very severe in tone; it accused me of various things. One, I remember, was that I had made accusations without basis of fact that the legation was withholding the news service from me. Of course, Mr. Hugh Wilson had withheld it until the receipt of the cable from Mr. Creel, which, for some reason unknown to me, had made him become officially aware of Mr. Creel's existence. I have already told you about that. There were other points made against me, too, in this letter, but what it said is not of importance. The interesting thing was that the false relations we bore to each other had brought about the absurd situation that my enemies took for attacking me the very moment when they, as friends, were about to entertain me. They chose a moment for this last attack when I had no means and no time to answer carefully their letter. They knew my records had already been sent to Paris through the diplomatic pouch. I could get no stenographer. I was to go to their own farewell dinner and leave early in the morning. I wondered at their letter. My suspicions were aroused, but I could not determine why it was written. It proved to be an attack which they were preparing in order to furnish evidence against me for a complaint which Mr. Stovall was sending to President Wilson, to reach him before my arrival in America. There it was promptly submitted to me, as I'll explain later. What did I do about going to the dinner? Whether I went

or not has no bearing on this story, of course; but I went. They were all gay and friendly; they drank my health and a pleasant trip, and in a confidential discussion after dinner I was told not to bother to answer the letter, but to destroy it and forget it!

Next morning at the railroad station, just as I was about to take the train from Berne, I received a telegram¹ through the legation from Paris, in which Mr. Kerney quoted from a cable² which Mr. Creel had sent to Paris for me, not through diplomatic sources, but through the Naval Intelligence—a means of confidential communication which did not extend to Switzerland. Mr. Kerney's telegram, quoting Mr. Creel, said that if I desired to continue my work in Switzerland I should do so with the support of the President, or if, in my opinion, the legation had destroyed my usefulness there, I was to stay in Paris and undertake definite jobs there, after which I could go to London and to Stockholm on special missions. It looked as if I was to write my own ticket now. Anything, in fact, except return to America. Stay in Switzerland? Of course I wanted to stay. Hadn't I spent two wretched months and more making myself familiar with the situation, while in my mind the importance of the work grew and I knew that it ought to be done and that I could do it? But here was another delay. I could not get off the train and

¹ Appendix XXI.

² Appendix XXII.

stay in Berne on the strength of this telegram, because all my personal effects and official papers had already started for Paris. My passport was visaed by the Berne legation for America. It would no longer permit me to stay in Switzerland. I had to go on at least as far as Paris to obtain a fresh passport, and in addition to assure myself definitely from there by cable that I should have a statement from some authority known in Switzerland to show that I was not an impostor. It was Mr. Creel again who said now that with the support of the President I should remain in Switzerland. Suppose the legation still maintained, as before, that they could not credit anything that came from Mr. Creel or from any other source than the State Department? And suppose that, as before, the State Department should remain silent for another two months? No; I must see that my official position was established clearly. I left word in Berne that I might return at once, and went on to Paris. From Paris next day, March 29th, I replied to Mr. Creel through the Naval Intelligence that I believed the work in Switzerland was important and should be continued.¹ I wanted to complete the task if it was possible to do so honestly. I protested that I did not feel my effectiveness had been destroyed, if only the legation's misrepresentations and suggestions of mystery about my work should cease. Such a

¹ Appendix XXIII.

letter as I had asked from Mr. Stovall would insure it. I said I was convinced it would be of value for me to go to America on a steamer sailing April 6th, for a full discussion of all the committee's work in Europe—for by that time I had some idea of the difficulties which the other representatives were meeting and I had constructive suggestions to make as to further activities which ought to be undertaken. As to the mission in France, England, and Stockholm, which had been suggested for me, I had insisted upon knowing details, and they were never given. I waited in Paris a week in uncertainty. I worked each day with Mr. Kerney, developing details of future work for Switzerland. Hearing nothing further from Mr. Creel, I left Paris for Bordeaux the morning of April 6th.

On arriving at Bordeaux that evening, I found the American consul had been telephoned to from the Paris embassy to stop my sailing and have me return at once to Paris. The steamer, fortunately, had been delayed for two days, so back I went. I found I was called back in response to a cable from Mr. Creel saying that he wanted me to stay in France for important work. As to the important work in France, still no details were given. Hadn't he ten days before cabled me I should return with the President's support to Switzerland if I wished to, and hadn't I cabled back that I did wish it? But now I was to cable my acceptance of his request to stay in France,

and only after that full particulars could be sent me.

It must have seemed to the committee in America very desirable to keep this woman from returning. Twice I had cabled that I must have full details of any proposed new work before I would consider it. This time I was annoyed and did not answer the cable, but returned to Bordeaux to find that the American consul was again in receipt of an urgent message from Paris that I was not to sail, but to return there once more. Again the steamer's sailing was further postponed and again I went back to Paris and found this time that the reason for my being recalled was a cable from Mr. Will Irwin, who had been put temporarily in charge of the foreign educational work of the Committee on Public Information. Mr. Irwin's cable said:¹ "If you find it at all possible to get along, prefer your staying in Berne, because your work there would be more valuable to us than your work with the French." Pough! No word of the letter I was demanding of the legation in Berne or of the termination of the diplomatic misrepresentations under which I had been laboring, and here I had taken the ten-hour trip back and forth from Bordeaux to Paris four times on four consecutive days! and was to take it again the next day for the fifth time. The weather was damp and the railroad compartments still heated, and it meant physical

¹ Appendix XXIV.

suffering to me, because of my foot. I left a cable¹ with Mr. Kerney to be sent to Mr. Irwin and declared that no further cable or message could drag me from Bordeaux again. I said in the cable to Mr. Irwin that I had received Mr. Creel's cable telling me to remain in Paris, and his own telling me to return to Berne. That I was sailing for America on the *Niagara*, because my work abroad was unsettled and because I believed a personal conference with Mr. Creel would be ultimately time-saving. I agreed that I would be of greater value in Switzerland than in France and referred to cables I had sent to Mr. Creel giving the conditions under which I would return there—namely, that the legation should be forced to recognize my position officially. I said I should need also a diplomatic passport to facilitate my work. (All the other representatives of the Committee on Public Information had diplomatic passports!) Failing these conditions, I considered my efforts to work in Switzerland were so hampered that I would not return. I said that if on my arrival in America my conditions could be met, I would return at once to Europe after a conference with Mr. Creel in Washington, and please to arrange for my sailing back to Europe about May 1st. I expected to arrive in New York about April 25th and did so, having left Bordeaux finally on the *Niagara*, April 12th.

¹Appendix XXV.

The trip home was dreary. There was none of the thrill of going to the great adventure, however tragic it might prove. The steamer was small and uncomfortable; the passengers were an incongruous group. There were several writers, French and American, coming to America to sell their stories and their opinions of the war. There was a French mission coming to urge that France wanted its military forces supplemented at once with American armies, not replaced later after their own extinction. In fact, they wanted our soldiers untrained, unequipped if need be, but they wanted them hurried across the ocean as quickly as possible. In looking back, it seems strange that as late as April, 1918, our intention of helping promptly and effectively should have still been mistrusted. But the greater number of passengers were members of the Red Cross and the Y. M. C. A. who had not liked their work or their superiors and were returning home with a grievance.

I myself felt harassed. I could not look forward with joy to going home and seeing my family, because I might have to leave them again at once, and not to leave them meant the defeat of my plans to do effective work honestly for our country.

No one met me on the dock. Those were war-days and steamers came and went stealthily. I had thought that only my immediate family and the Committee on Public Information would

know of my return. But I found that interviews about it had been given out from Washington and it was heralded in the newspapers as another proof of woman's unfitness for any place but home. Yes, according to the papers, I had made a failure. In several accounts I was described as suffering from a nervous breakdown; I, whose pet vanity is that I have the endurance of ten strong men! I made no answer and gave no explanations, although I was urged to do so by the officers of the New York State Woman Suffrage party, of which I was still chairman, because they said I owed it to woman's work in general. I wasn't very much interested in what the papers said. My attention was fixed upon going back to Switzerland and finishing my work there.

One newspaper account I remember particularly, because from it I saw how difficult it is to judge one's own situation objectively. This account was very complete. It described my mission to Switzerland, of course, as a failure, told of my controversies with the legation in Berne, suggested that I had wasted my time in many unnecessary trips to Paris—"joy rides" in the slang of to-day, but with no joy to the rider! It seemed to put the blame for all difficulties upon me. I felt that I had every right to be aggrieved. But this very account, I found later, was believed by our diplomatic secretaries in Berne to have been inspired by me in order to put myself

in a favorable light before the public and to put them in the wrong! They did not want to have their obstructions to my work known, and they thought it was I who had published them. Because of their absorption in their own interests, they ignored everything else in the article. The statement, it seems, had been given out by Mr. Will Irwin, and he, undoubtedly, thought it impartial to both sides.

When I arrived in New York I still hoped to carry out the program I had cabled to Mr. Irwin, go to Washington for an interview with Mr. Creel in which everything would be settled as I wanted it, and start back to Switzerland within a few days, after having had a glimpse of my family. It was not to happen in quite that way. The first words with which my little girl greeted me were, "Papa has news for you which he says will make him and me very happy, but which you won't like at all." It developed that Mr. Creel had written to tell my husband that I was coming back with the idea of returning to Europe at once, but my position in Switzerland had been so prejudiced that it was doubtful if I could return at all.

I saw Mr. Creel at once and presented to him a carefully prepared statement of all my experiences, including copies of letters I had exchanged with members of the legation in Berne and of the cables I had received and sent. Mr. Creel, on his part, submitted to me the letter which Mr.

Stovall had written President Wilson, in which, as I remember, the minister said that, although I was a lady of great charm, he thought it best for the country's interest that I should not return to Switzerland, because I had done various reprehensible things and had made unfounded accusations against the legation.

I do not now recall the various steps by which it was finally decided that I should return to Switzerland on my own terms. I believe it was partly because I had acquired full information of the situation there and had detailed and definite proposals to submit for future work. Perhaps it was also somewhat due to my own strong conviction that not to send me back would be a regrettable waste of human effort and would cause an unavoidable delay in starting a necessary work. Other considerations, too, may have influenced the decision. But it must have taken courage on Mr. Creel's part to reopen the question of my going back in face of the general opposition not only to me myself, but to the methods upon which I still inflexibly insisted. Of course I had maintained throughout that no underhand work was necessary; that it should all be done honestly and openly and with the knowledge of the Swiss government. The legation and other diplomatic and propaganda representatives, and the journalists who were familiar with the situation in Switzerland—Mr. Carl Ackermann, for instance—still declared such methods were at

the very least impracticable. The opposition was being emphatically expressed. It was cabled to various government departments here from all sources in Switzerland which the legation reached. Even Mr. Kerney accepted my return as impossible. But Mr. Creel did reopen the question and President Wilson again indorsed my plans and said I should go back with his support.

With a view to clearing the situation, Mr. Creel and I had several interviews with Mr. Hans Sulzer, the Swiss Minister to the United States. Mr. Sulzer was a prominent business man in Switzerland, with a national reputation for ability and fairness. The post of minister had been thrust upon him to meet an awkward war situation. He had not been trained in diplomacy as a career, and for that reason, perhaps, he saw that the work we planned could be carried out with benefit to Switzerland as well as to the United States, and he undertook to notify the Swiss government of my mission. He gave me a letter of introduction to the President of the Swiss Confederation, in which he fully explained the nature of the work I proposed to do. President Wilson wrote me a letter¹ in which he said: "I am glad to learn that your own convictions and investigations lead you to indorse the unreservedly American policy of absolute openness. We have nothing to conceal, no secret ambitions

¹ Appendix XXVI.

to further, and our activities in every foreign country are properly confined to a very frank exposition of America's war aims and national ideals." Mr. Stovall was notified officially this time of my return and the true object of my appointment. The military attaché in Berne was instructed by cable to secure an office for me. My plans and budget were accepted. It was agreed that before leaving I should choose an American stenographer and a German-American translator, who were to follow me in a few days. My diplomatic passport arrived in due course, and, although things had not progressed as quickly as I had hoped, within several weeks everything was settled, and for the second time I sailed away.¹

This time it was as hard to go as the first time. While there was no uncertainty as to my plans, there was no sense of adventure. I knew exactly to what I was returning—a situation which was dreary in the extreme. You can imagine that any satisfaction which I felt was mixed with the greatest reluctance and distaste.

I went in a transport by way of England. When we landed at Liverpool we heard much of German successes. It was some time before I realized that while we were at sea there had been a really significant enemy advance. Those early days of June, 1918, looked very dark for the Allied cause.

¹ Appendix XXVII.

I had taken letters to Lord Beaverbrook, the Minister of Information, and to Lord Northcliffe, chief of British propaganda in enemy countries. I spent several days in London and saw these gentlemen, as well as the heads of the British cinema propaganda and the cable and wireless news service, and, thanks to their kindness, I gained quite an acquaintance with British methods. We discussed many plans for co-operating in Switzerland, which in the end came to little.

Just about that time the styles in governmental investigations were undoubtedly running toward information departments. There was a Parliamentary investigation of the British Ministry of Information that was almost as bitter as the Congressional investigation of Mr. Creel's department, and probably as hampering to its work.

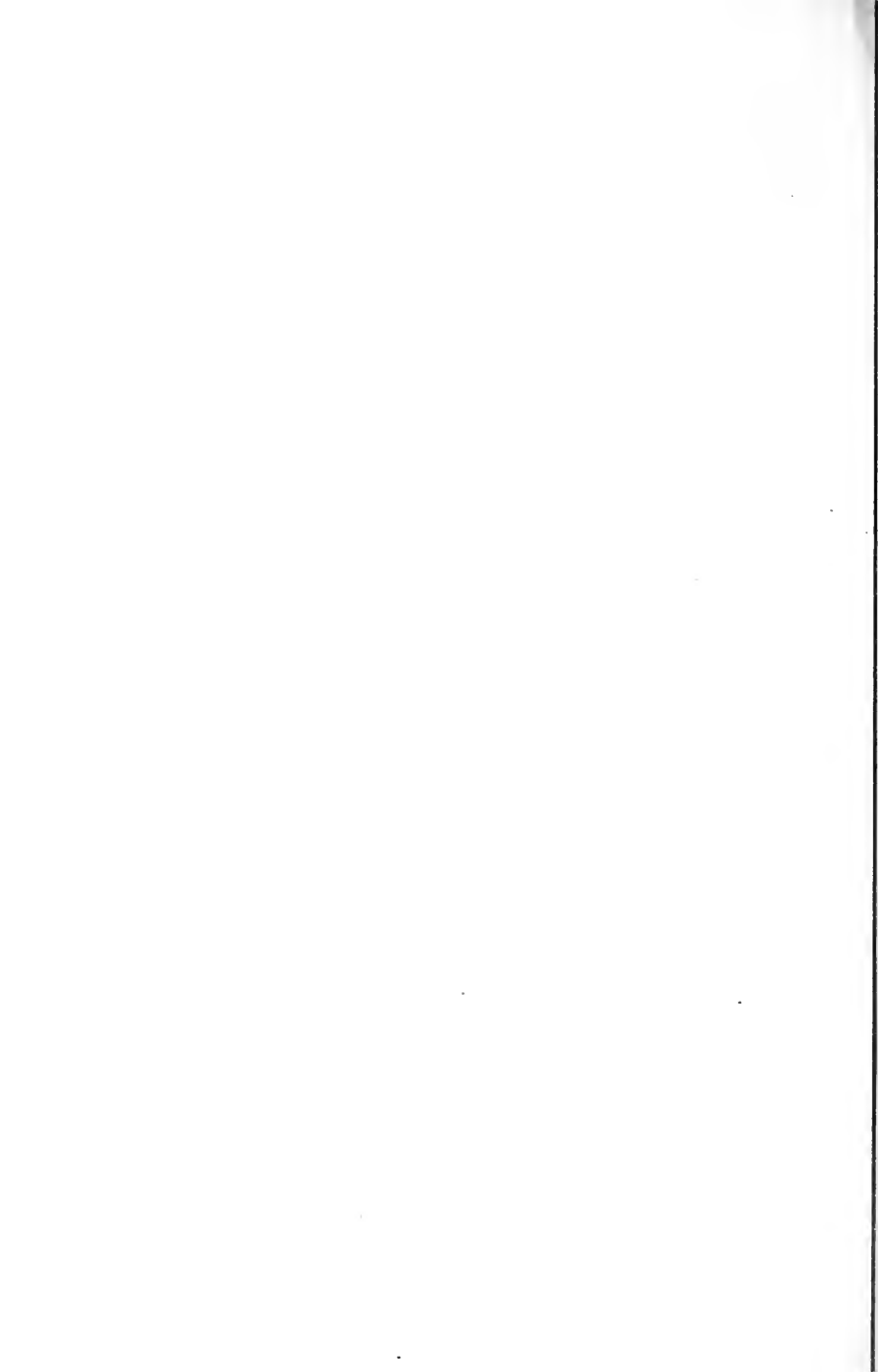
My visit to London was uneventful enough. I saw no air raids, but found the streets there even darker at night than the streets in Paris. I was struck by the number of men at this critical time in restaurants, theaters, and about everywhere—many more than in Paris. Every British soldier must have spent his leave in London. In comparison again with Paris, the food seemed to me insufficient, although while I was there pork products were taken from the ration list and made a great difference. The men and women I met were depressed. One felt everywhere that the war had lasted a long time.

In thinking of the darkness of this period, it is almost with apologies that I tell of my pleasure and happiness at being given a little dog. No one but a fellow dog-lover will understand it. It happened almost accidentally. I was talking to an old friend and telling him of my winter's experiences in Berne. I had told him how for the first time in my life I had been alone among strangers and had not liked it. Even a dog, I felt, would have helped. As soon as I had said this, we saw that here I was on my way back to be again alone among strangers, and again I should want the companionship that a dog can give. So off we went to find one. We looked at many. The one I decided upon is a sober little white Sealyham, with a black spot on his back, with short legs and a rough coat and a brown patch over one eye. Perhaps that is why he can look at you so wistfully. He had a preposterous kennel name, but I promptly rechristened him "Sonny." Sonny is an aristocrat. You can see it, no matter how dirty and grimy he is. He is not one of those high-strung, egotistical, reactionary aristocrats, but one whose breeding has resulted in an imperturbable calm and a poise which no circumstance whatever can shake—from air raids to canine conflicts. In Berne when a great German police dog met him on the winding staircase of the hotel, took him up by the nape of the neck and shook him like a rat, Sonny alone, after his rescue, was calm. The owner of the police dog



SONNY

The author's constant companion



was hot and breathless; I was pale and trembling, but Sonny wagged his tail serenely and was ready at once to pass it by as an incident of no importance. He is particularly unobtrusive; so much so that many times on our travels he would have been overlooked and lost if he had not had in his own quiet way been on the lookout to store himself safely under the seats of trains or cabs.

From the beginning he was friendly, but undemonstrative. I took him for walks in Green Park and spent one afternoon sitting on the grass of Hyde Park, trying to make friends with him. He soon looked to me for understanding and care, and even before we left London we had become fast friends.

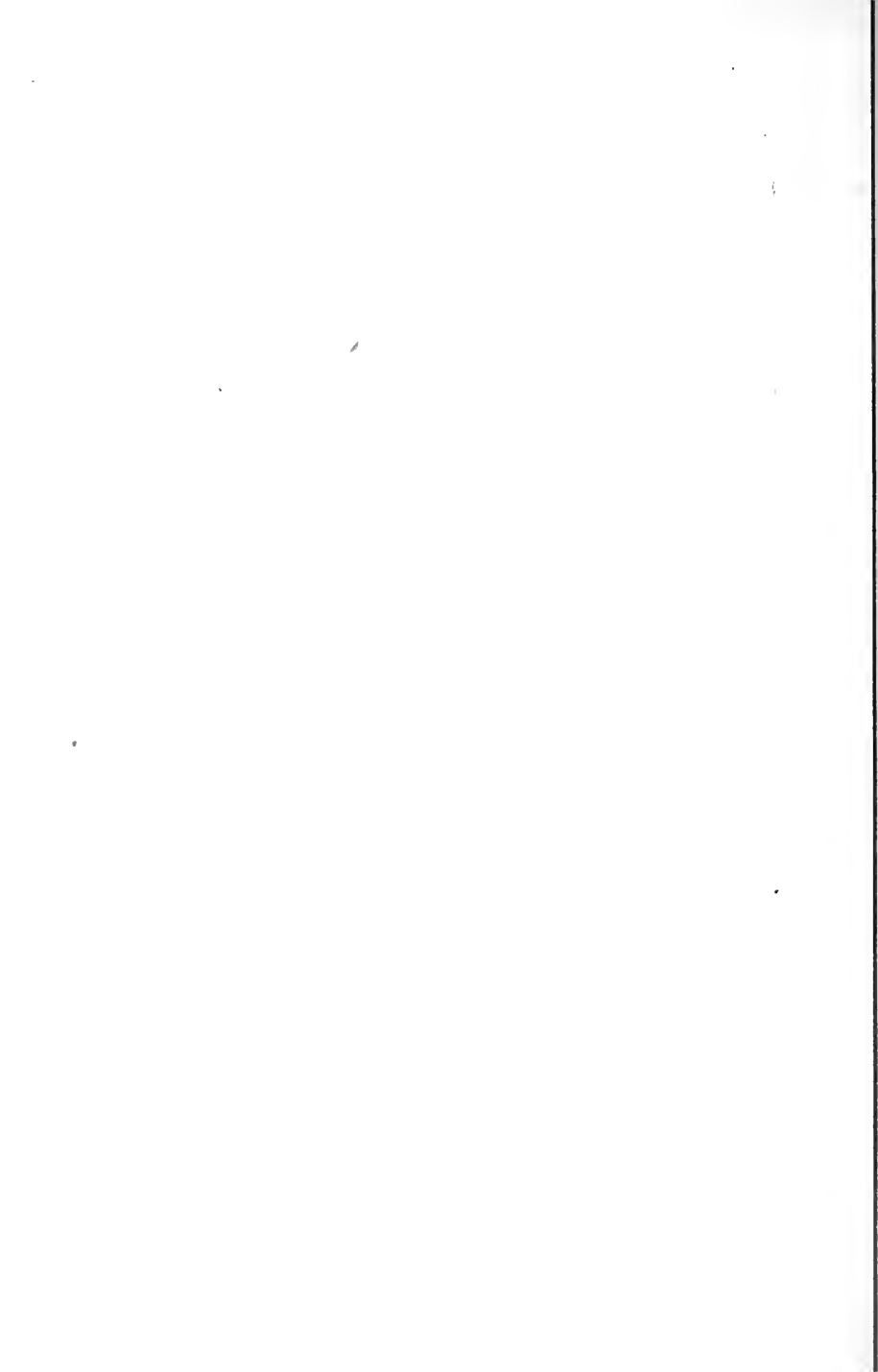
These were indeed anxious times. The day we left for Paris it seemed that the Germans might reach there before we did. It was not yet clear that they had already met their final check. Again I saw Paris in a gloomy mood. Many people had left, still more were preparing to leave and were packing their books and their treasures. But the business of war, of course, was being pushed with more energy than ever. I met Mr. Klobukowski, the new head of the French propaganda activities. I saw other officials, and to them, too, I proposed plans for co-operation. After a few days I hurried on to Switzerland, although it seemed a bad moment to begin such work as ours in a country which, like Switzer-

land, wanted the war to end and was ready to hail the victor. Before going to Berne, I stopped in Geneva on various matters of business, and there I saw again Professor and Madame Rappard, who welcomed me warmly back to their country. Professor Rappard agreed to come to Berne in a few days and himself present me to Mr. Calonder, President of the Swiss Confederation, and to the other members of the Swiss Federal Council.



DR. FELIX CALONDER

Newly elected President of the Swiss Confederation for the year 1918



CHAPTER VI

AT WORK

WHEN I reached Berne and descended from the train I was met by several acquaintances and was surprised to find Mr. Hugh Wilson among them. Could I take it as a sign that the hatchet was to be buried? But it made little difference, because from now on the diplomatic set was to fade from my sphere of activities. To the end I had always to send my cables through the legation and occasionally came into contact with its members over business matters. But the social connection was to cease. It did not do so abruptly. When I first returned Mr. Hugh Wilson's friendly wife asked me now and then to a meal or a party. The minister asked me to his Fourth-of-July celebration and was aggrieved that I did not go. The assistant military attaché, who in peace-times is a distinguished pianist of foreign birth, and who had shaken his head, gently indeed, over my wild schemes, still disapproved of my plans. But he and his witty, sharp-tongued wife, who live in a charming château on the Lake of Geneva, asked me several times

to luncheon and once to a house party. The legation secretaries, too, asked me from time to time. But I was busy. I had gone to Switzerland to work, and I found more work to be done than I could manage. The conditions there were not well adapted to hard work as we know it here. In Switzerland, as in France, offices and business houses close each day from twelve to two. With the diplomatic set the one-o'clock luncheon and the pleasant talk over coffee and liquors drift on well into the afternoon. I had no time for this generally accepted institution. I organized my office on the American plan. It did not close from twelve to two, and I remained there throughout the day. I had my luncheon of a cup of tea and a heavy, dark, Swiss bread sandwich at my desk. I went to no dinner parties, and I did not live at the fashionable Bellevue-Palace Hotel, but at the more secluded Bernerhof. Invitations grew fewer. A feeling of social hostility on the part of the American diplomatic set arose toward me. It settled into enmity. It is not strange that it did so. Here I had returned to Switzerland with President Wilson's special support, in spite of their efforts to keep me away. That in itself must have been difficult for them to accept. But in addition they still predicted, and they no doubt believed, that my plans were doomed to failure. It was to avoid this failure with all its attendant risks that they had tried from the first to head off my activities and have me recalled to

America. A failure now would be regrettable, no doubt, but it would vindicate their judgment. I was to prove them wrong, because my work from the very beginning was a success. If human nature were not faulty they would have rejoiced that good work was being done for their country. Perhaps they did, but they liked me none the more on that account. And that was not all; here I was even in little things going against all rules and working for long hours each day. Wasn't my neglect of that midday social intercourse, my refusal of nearly all social invitations, a tacit criticism of their easy methods? No, it is no wonder that I came to be regarded by them in an openly hostile manner. Or, at least, this is the way I explained it to myself when, several months after my return, I heard that they were gossiping unkindly about me and I found that some of them bowed to me coldly when we met, and others not at all!

On the other hand, I was treated with marked friendliness by the Swiss, both by those I already knew and by those I was to meet. On June 26th Professor Rappard came from Geneva and presented me, as he had agreed to do, to President Calonder and to other important officials. I was received with the greatest cordiality and friendliness by each one, and especially by President Calonder. Perhaps they had heard that I had stood out against the absurd system of secrecy which was making Switzerland such a hotbed of

intrigue, and that may have had something to do with their kindly reception. On my part I was impressed by President Calonder's simplicity and his clearness of view. He seemed to me a big man. I discussed with him and the other gentlemen my proposed work and the way I planned to carry it out. I assured them I should be careful to respect their neutrality laws, no matter how severe they were. They were particularly interested in a suggestion I made of sending a group of distinguished Swiss representatives to the United States to see our war activities and to explain the difficulties of the Swiss situation to the American public, and they offered to help in arranging it. In fact, they agreed that such general plans as I outlined would be an excellent thing for Switzerland as well as for us.

The future of my work looked bright. The big obstacles were now all overcome, although there were still to be many little difficulties. I had been very much relieved on arriving in Berne to find that good offices had been obtained for me. The hotel where I lived is in the center of Berne, but because of the crowded condition of the little city, the office, a semi-detached villa, was on the outskirts of the town, several miles away, across a long bridge and up a steep hill.

The morning after I arrived Sonny and I walked briskly over the bridge, marveled at a glimpse of the snow-clad mountains, and hurried

on up the hill. We found the house locked up. I was keen to begin my work on the instant. But such is not the way government business proceeds in foreign countries. In the first place, the keys to the office were lost. They had been in the possession of one of the military attachés. I was told they would be found to-morrow. I fretted. I did not want to wait. Oh, well, if I was as impatient as all that, some one would look for them at once and perhaps they would be found by afternoon. For two days I waited and nagged, and finally, when I was on the point of having the doors broken down (it would take time to have even that done), the keys turned up.

I had a few desks and chairs from my previous trip which I had left with the kind Italian journalist, but for several days I could find no one to deliver them. With the assistants coming from America, I must have more furniture. The prices! I became miserly. I couldn't bear to pay the current Swiss rates for plain tables, wooden desks, and chairs. I shopped and shopped, and tried to rent and to buy second-hand furniture, and reconciled myself to the inevitable only when I found that Swiss prices, high as they were, were less than the official wholesale French prices to the American army.

There was always the problem of delivery. It was very slow and some of the bills for it I refused to pay, at the cost of terrific scenes. In Switzerland at this time there was no gasolene for mo-

tors, grain was scarce and dear, and few horses were available; man labor was cheaper. Even large desks were hauled by a man, one at a time, in a little push-cart over the bridge and up the long hill. If the shop was very *chic*, a big dog helped the man. I am telling you a great deal about office furniture. It's very trivial, of course, but when the people who have heard that I did war-work for the government in a thrilling place like Switzerland ask me about my experiences and my triumphs, I hesitate to tell them that my most vivid triumphs were such small, uninteresting things as having furniture promptly delivered, and that the greatest of enterprise and executive ability went into buying typewriting and mimeographing machines when other people could not find them. No one can imagine the time and effort that such details cost. Although some American commercial companies had offices or representatives in Switzerland, they could rarely undertake to deliver anything until after the war. And very few supplies could be found there. Typewriters and mimeographing machines, necessary in my work, were especially difficult to obtain. It seemed impossible to make people outside of Switzerland understand the situation. When, after hunting vainly throughout Switzerland, I telegraphed to Mr. Kerney in Paris asking for typewriters, and saying, "None obtainable in Switzerland," his answer came back: "Remington has a branch in Zurich. Have you tried

that?" It was the same thing in trying to make the Washington office understand. As my work developed, I needed more stenographers. I could find none in Switzerland. Mr. Kerney tried unsuccessfully to find some in France or England for me. Then I cabled to Washington: "No stenographers obtainable in Europe. Please send two additional from America." The answer came back, "Try to find stenographers in Paris." I felt abused. Nobody would give us credit for common sense, and the exchange of telegrams and cables meant long delays.

Many difficulties, as petty as these, made the first days of my return very discouraging. The Italian journalist who had offered to share his office with me and who was really, I suspect, in the Italian secret service, had turned over to me one of his translators. I remember standing there in my new office one day, looking about—two desks and two chairs in one big room, and the rest of the three-story villa empty, and I alone with only Sonny and the complaining translator. I wondered if ever, ever it would become the beehive I could see in my imagination. How could an office be organized and real work done under such conditions? The Italian journalist came in and I told him how I felt.

"Oh," he said, "there's no reason to be discouraged. It will be eight or nine months before you are organized. You can't expect anything else."

Eight or nine months! "Why," I thought, "the war will be over and I'll be home." It seemed an eternity. I confided this to my British confrère as an amusing example of Latin slowness.

"No," he said; "that's the way things go here. Your country sends you off on a mission and in the pressure of more important things forgets you. I've been here fourteen months and I have not yet found a secretary or an office staff."

Less than one week after my return to Switzerland my office was formally opened. My American stenographer had arrived, but not the German-American translator. The fact that he was part German made it difficult to arrange his passport. I had been fortunate enough to find Mr. George B. Fife in Berne. He is an American editor who during the time I was away from Switzerland had been sent by the American Red Cross to undertake propaganda work there. Its necessity had been realized by every one. Mr. Fife became my assistant. With him, the American stenographer, and the Italian translator, our work began.

Things in Switzerland never went smoothly or easily for us. From the beginning to the end our office force was insufficient. Our Italian translator proved a broken reed and could not stand the American pace. She soon succumbed to an attack of nervous prostration. The Italian journalist and a kindly Swiss reporter, neither of whom

could speak one word of English, came to our rescue for a few days and we went on somehow.

It was as difficult to find workers in Switzerland as it was to find offices there, and for the same reason. Berne was overcrowded with activities fostered by the war, and every person capable of doing anything had been employed already by the foreign diplomatic offices or by the greatly increased Swiss government service. In addition, there was the epidemic of Spanish grippe, which waxed and waned in Switzerland, but was never overcome while I was there. Many offices were closed from time to time because of this scourge and every office was constantly short-handed.

My immediate problem was to find assistants who could translate from English into German and into French, and others to open the door and answer the telephone, to typewrite and to run the Roneo mimeograph-machine. In the first days Mr. Fife, a highly paid editor, spent half his time in an apron working at the Roneo, and all the other office jobs fell to my lot. It was clearly a waste of time, and I determined to find a way out. But I had been warned against advertising for assistance and against taking any one into my employ unless I knew the person's entire history. There were the German spies, you remember, who would be sure to apply and who would then find out about everything we were doing and report it to the German govern-

ment. Tales of spies still flourished, but to my mind the first necessity was to have the day's work done. One day, when our office had been opened only a short time, a good story, extra long, came in by wireless. Mr. Fife, with his hands stained with Roneo ink, each finger held carefully apart, stood before my desk and said we simply could not handle it. The Italian translator was still ill. We must find some one to replace her and some one to typewrite in German. I telephoned to the various American offices to beg for a few hours' loan of such a person. It was optimistic on my part to hope for help. But finally at one of the offices I was told in a jocose way that here was a woman I could have if I wanted. She was a German spy, they said, but could translate and typewrite. They were trying to keep her shut into a room at that very time and out of mischief for a few hours. Would I take her off their hands and amuse her? Their joke was no joke to me. I was delighted. I told them to send her to me, and thus began my policy of engaging people thought to be spies or of doubtful standing to do our necessary work.

Miss White, the American stenographer, awaited the new arrival with excitement. She had read Mr. Carl Ackermann's "Bolsheviking the Swiss," and other highly colored accounts of stirring situations in Switzerland. When she heard my conversation over the telephone—heard me ask to have the German spy sent over—

she was thrilled to the core. Here was a touch of real romance and of real adventure. All women spies, she thought, must be young, distinguished, beautiful, and ingratiating. Such a foreign lady in the office would put spice into any work, no matter how dull. But she was to be disappointed. It was a new departure—it might be, in fact, a real adventure—to run a government office with enemy spies, especially in a place like Switzerland, where every advantage was fought for so bitterly; but adventures in reality are not what they are in weekly magazines. The spy was old and ugly, thin and unromantic—totally undistinguished, and had a very bitter tongue, and could not hide her hatred of the Allies and especially of the Americans. There was nothing romantic about her, but she was a good, hard worker. We kept her for several months, and as our work grew she became for a time indispensable. She worked in a little room on the second floor. I remember on more occasions than one, when I did not want to be disturbed, slipping up to the second floor and locking the door. She must have noticed it, but she never made any comment about it.

There began at once to be many applicants for positions, and soon we were employing other people, too, who we had reason to believe were spies. When any unsolicited person applied it was natural in Switzerland to suspect him. My method was to engage the suspected applicant

for a trial; to give him more to do than he could do. When his efforts relaxed, or if he began to prove troublesome, we would send him away. Thus each one contributed at least a few days' assistance. One man, when he was dismissed, became so persistent in his desire to return that I almost grew uneasy. Wherever I went, to Zurich or Geneva, I was pursued by him, begging for his re-employment. Another man, when he was discharged without explanation after a few weeks' work, naïvely brought me a memorial purporting to be from a Belgian official, explaining that, although he had fought in that country in the German army, he was a Swiss citizen and his career as a German soldier should be overlooked, because, the explanation was, he had been forced to fight with the Germans as a means of livelihood and had not done it through real sympathy. He would return to our employ, so devoted had he become to the Allied cause, and work without salary! Most of the people who we thought were spies were clumsy and it was easy enough to see through their efforts. I began to have an understanding of the problems our enemies must have to face in maintaining their great spy system with such poor human material. This great system, of which we spoke in bated breath, for which we had such respect, was not invincible, after all.

My policy of using suspects meant a real strain. Although we had nothing to conceal in

our press work and were delighted to have copies of everything in the office sent to German quarters (we hoped they were found discouraging), we had to guard unceasingly against sabotage. For instance, in translating and in typing an official announcement, our woman spy substituted the word "offensive" for "defensive" in a case where it made a difference of meaning. I kept wondering what form the sabotage would take next. What would they, the spies, in spite of their clumsiness, think of that I could not foresee in time to prevent? Again the familiar caution rang in my ears, "You cannot tell *what* they'll do." No, of course I could not tell. Was I justified in taking the chance? Would it be better to let the work remain undone? Was the strain telling on me, and was I growing nervous and losing my courage? No, I decided that the work was the important thing, and I kept on. In spite of the strain and the anxiety and the unfailing watchfulness it required on our part, I was immensely amused to feel that our enemy, the Germans, were doing the drudgery of our office for us and were enabling us to do the work and to accomplish the results which they began now to show so plainly that they feared. It was work which would have been impossible without their assistance.

As our office became known, there were, in addition to suspects, a number of applicants who had no business training at all. These people

we encouraged to learn typewriting, mimeographing, and telephoning, and gave them every facility and assistance during the evenings, and some of them became, finally, useful employees.

Our work grew rapidly. I begged—nagged, in fact—for more assistance from America—for stenographers, for our long-promised German-American translator, and for more editorial help. As the months passed, two more stenographers and an editor finally arrived, but the German-American, whom we needed so much, met delay after delay because of his parentage and came only after the armistice was signed, when our office was being closed. Fortunately, assistance came from other quarters, too. A department of the United States army sent two representatives to investigate conditions in Switzerland, and their reports upon the efforts and achievements of our office resulted in the promise that officers from the American Expeditionary Forces with journalistic experience and a knowledge of French or German would be assigned to us. However, only one of them arrived before the pressure of our work was ended. Without our own enterprise in finding and training assistants in Switzerland, we could have accomplished little.

The detail of organizing journalistic work in a country like Switzerland with three official languages was enormous. Every news item and article which came from America had to be first

edited to suit conditions in Switzerland, written out in simple English, and then translated into the two main languages of the Swiss press—German and French; the Italian we never even attempted. The French we managed fairly well; the German was always our chief difficulty. That was not all. The Swiss press was captious. A simple and correct translation would not do. The German and French had to be written in the accepted journalistic style, which even in the news columns was very marked.

Our first real triumph was to persuade the Agence Télégraphique Suisse, the official news agency, to accept our daily news service and distribute it to the newspapers. For three days running we submitted it to them and waited their decision with anxiety. We had been told that they never, never would take it. The diplomats had been sure of it. It was useless to try, they had said. We would be considered a propaganda, not a news office. But, like all the prophecies of failure, it proved to be false. The acceptance of our service by the Agence Télégraphique Suisse was important to us, because it saved us from the necessity of establishing machinery of our own to reach each paper daily, and because news sent out by them had an authority which a foreign service could not hope to obtain. From the first the news about events in America began to appear through them in all the Swiss papers and was marked "American Service," or

"A. S." It was a good introduction to the Swiss public for us.

Of course, we had pitfalls to guard against. We were warned that, although the Agence Télégraphique Suisse took our service, they were not really sympathetic. We were told to be careful! Perhaps they, too, were a little suspicious, but we had to put a big effort into making our service accurate. Our figures of armies and supplies were so enormous that at first, when they were published, we would often find them transposed or a naught or two dropped. One day in Zurich I happened to see such a misstatement on the bulletin-board in a street-car station. I believed it was one of our German spies at work, or an inaccurate translator—I hated inaccuracies! I hurried to call my office in Berne on the telephone, my temper all ruffled, to find that the mistake had been discovered already by Mr. Fife and was the fault of the Agence Télégraphique Suisse. After that Mr. Fife, with patience and enterprise, spared no efforts to confirm and reconfirm our figures by telephone and by messenger. In order, also, to guard against any oversight of important news, we would telephone or telegraph directly to the papers, calling their attention to items of especial interest which were being sent to them by the Agence Télégraphique Suisse. The items themselves we would carefully repeat. There were, too, constant leaks in our service through France, which

spoiled some good publicity and threatened to invalidate our arrangement with the Agence Télégraphique Suisse. That wireless service of itself needed as much safeguarding as the work of our spies!

Not only our news items through the Agence Télégraphique Suisse began to appear in the press, but special articles, too, on conditions and methods in this country which were sent directly from our own office to the papers and magazines, were published. Articles about our great wheat crops, about our war gardens and modern agricultural implements, our hog-raising, etc., were accepted by the agricultural papers. The milk-industry papers published information about American cows; the medical papers, about our war-time medical and surgical problems; the educational journals, about American schools; the socialist papers, about the conditions of the working-classes here. Every kind of paper, including women's magazines, art journals, etc., was provided with appropriate articles. The daily papers, too, took special articles about our ship-building, our war finance, and our general activities. We would translate, mimeograph, and send to the papers official and semi-official reports which gave information of interest. We sent to editors and writers a weekly bulletin reviewing the chief items of the week's news in the United States, with editorial notes showing its significance.

We found that Reuter and Havas supplied to the press, as a rule, only inadequate extracts of the President's speeches and of other important American statements and documents. These we supplemented by full accounts carefully translated. When we found that the significance of any important statement had been overlooked by the Swiss papers we would hasten to point it out; for instance, there was the President's now famous speech of September 27th, restating the issues of the war and giving particulars of what the League of Nations and the Peace Treaty should guarantee. Its importance was not at first realized, and only extracts were published. When I saw this I started off in a borrowed motor to call upon the editors of the chief papers in several of the larger German-Swiss cities, and by my visits obtained not only editorial comment upon it, but its publication in full, even after it had lost its news value.

But obtaining results was not an easy thing. The secret and underhand methods so generally practised in Switzerland had aroused suspicion as to all new work. Deep-rooted prejudices on the part of honest editors had to be overcome. Before we ventured to offer our articles, letters carefully and patiently written and translated were sent to every paper and magazine, and I had had many personal interviews with editors to explain why the United States government had established a news and editorial office in Switzer-

land. I undertook to go from town to town and call on the editorial offices of the newspapers, naturally omitting those of the papers we knew to be German-owned. I don't see why these visits should have seemed so alarming at first, and I don't see why I should have hated them as I did. On these occasions I always had a sensation, somehow, of everything being dark. Even the bright glare of Swiss summer sunshine could not dispel that illusion. I suppose it came from a combination of shyness and fatigue and effort at expressing myself clearly in strange languages, because if the Swiss editors did not speak English—and very few of them did!—we spoke French; if they did not speak French, I had to try my bad German and often struggle with their dialects. Before I had a motor the train-traveling in itself was tiring and may have added to the difficulties. I always went alone.

I remember one day getting off a train in a little town, with the list of its papers and their editors in my hand, and starting on my tour. The first man was out. I felt such a sudden sense of relief that I took myself in hand at once and had the whole situation out with myself. On one side were these facts: that if I shirked and did not see the three or four editors in that little town, nobody would ever know the difference. Why, people at home had never even heard the name of that town, or of its neighbor, which I proposed to visit the next day. If our news did

not get into every little Swiss paper, who would be the wiser? Certainly nobody at home would know it was my fault. And if our success was only comparative, who was to judge? What was it going to be compared with, anyway? I could wait until the next train came along back to Berne and take it. On the other side, there was only a plan of work that I had laid out for myself to do—certain important things to be done first and the intervals to be filled with the comparatively unimportant things, such as the visits of that day. And if I hated and shrank from doing any of them, that was no reason for not doing them. After our work was well started I tried to share these visits with an assistant, the editor who had then arrived from America. But he shrank from them as I did—only he found reasons not to do them! So to the end they fell to my lot.

Almost without exception, the Swiss editors were most friendly and became interested in our plans. The German-Swiss have not a reputation for suavity or politeness, but I found them simple and kindly, and I like their type. When I have work to do I do not like the time which politeness consumes. As I progressed, my visits became easier and pleasanter, and when I said I was the director of the Committee on Public Information the editors would know what I was talking about and welcome me.

In fact, as a result of those visits there is

hardly an editor of a little Swiss paper who doesn't know of the Committee on Public Information of the United States of America. Switzerland is a small country, but I am told it has the greatest number of newspapers in proportion to its size of any country in the world, and I can readily and easily believe it. What a task it was merely to list all of those papers and magazines, to keep them properly catalogued as to size, ownership, political and religious views, and keep informed of their changing attitude about the war and the warring countries! But we did it and were always ready to give information to other departments as to the exact and latest political complexion even of the more obscure and smaller ones.

As our shrewd enemies soon noted, we paid particular attention in all our efforts to the German-language Swiss press. Not only were the French-Swiss papers already strongly pro-Entente almost without exception, but they were outnumbered about six to one by the German-Swiss papers. The latter had also another value for us. They were the only neutral papers printed in the German language, and they had free access into the Central Empires. They were followed by the thinkers of those countries as giving the only available news from the other side, and news items and articles published in them were freely quoted and commented upon in the German papers.

In addition to the various branches of our news service, we tried to follow the Swiss papers carefully and to deny some of the innumerable false statements and insinuations about the United States which were made in them by the enemy. This was a big task, because of the control the Germans had established over a large part of the Swiss press. They had bought in secret or subsidized a number of papers in both French and German Switzerland, which, under an appearance of neutrality, championed the German cause in every way. After the beginning of the war they also established several new publications, also ostensibly Swiss, with the clear purpose of propaganda. These papers sometimes appeared as pacifist organs and attacked America for prolonging the war. There were German news agencies, too, with Swiss names and Swiss directors. The *Mittel Presse*, an association of small Swiss newspapers, was supposed to have been subsidized or assisted in a way to make it a pro-German asset, and certainly all of the smaller papers served by it showed at first an extraordinary German bias. Another effective effort of the Germans at controlling the news situation in Switzerland was said to be through the judicious placing of advertising matter. This was of double value to them. The papers were subsidized and German products were advertised, which fitted in with their plan to resume peaceful penetration after a victorious end to the war. The German

activities with the Swiss press were so great that it was an open scandal, and pamphlets and books were written upon the subject. The Germans used the control of the Swiss press, which they had thus gained chiefly to prove indirectly to their own people, as well as to the Swiss, that the Allies were defeated and America was impotent to help. They were still harping upon this during the summer of 1918. They tried, also, to persuade the Swiss that America was untrustworthy; that she was going to invade Switzerland in order to attack Germany. They said that when we sent wheat to Switzerland it was bad wheat. They ridiculed the Red Cross gifts to Switzerland. To further prove our untrustworthiness, they had a great deal to say about a mythical secret treaty between the United States and Great Britain in regard to Japan, and when we had difficulties at the Mexican border they proclaimed that we were at war with that country and insinuated that we meant to annex it. To meet such assertions, we were kept busy cabling to America for denials from the Secretary of State and other officials, and for statistics and information of all sorts.

But that was not all. They put an enormous amount of cleverness and energy into trying to create difficulties between the Allies; for instance, they constantly published articles in their Swiss propaganda sheets and the controlled press showing that the French hated the Amer-

icans because of what they called the American invasion of France; they said that the American army was fed and provisioned by France and was responsible for the enormously increased prices of everything in that country; that we had put up huge buildings, docks, railroads, storehouses there without the consent of the French, and they predicted that we would end by controlling France economically. They tried to foment trouble between the British and the Americans by harping upon our supposed effort to steal Great Britain's place as a leader of commerce on the seas. To emphasize the danger to the Allies of America's increasing power, some of the German-owned papers in Switzerland even put their news of the war under the heading of "The American War." According to them, although America could not fight Germany, she was going to overwhelm her allies. Their press efforts doubled during the time I was in Switzerland, which seemed to me to indicate that they were frightened.

Reading the papers in order to keep track of such attacks and to check up our own publicity was always a time-consuming task. The papers had to be clipped in our own office, as there was no adequate press-clipping service in Switzerland. I never found any one to relieve me intelligently of reading the clippings, so I gave to it the quiet luncheon-hours. We could attempt to follow only the larger papers and occasionally

look over a few of the numerous smaller ones. Inadequate as our efforts were, we were soon sending back to America increasing quantities of clippings to prove the success of our news service.

We estimated that about two thousand paragraphs from our service, including many long articles, began to appear weekly in the Swiss press, and the number constantly increased as the weeks went by. This was, of course, in addition to all American war news and reports of events which reached Switzerland through Reuter and Havas and other correspondents. This amount of news may seem insignificant to an American news agent unfamiliar with the situation in Switzerland. But in view of the smallness of the country, of the control the Germans had established over part of its press, of the scarcity of print-paper and of the intense interest of the war and political news from all over the world, we felt that we were achieving a great success. We believed also that with the impetus which our work gave to the interest in American affairs, the items from Reuter and Havas multiplied in quantity and length.

CHAPTER VII

SUCCESS UNDER DIFFICULTIES

THE Germans with their great organization were alert to all danger. They at once took notice of our activities and I shall let them tell you a little of our success in their own peculiar editorial style, full of sarcasm and insinuation. Hardly more than a few days after we began our work the *Kölnische Zeitung* commented upon "the American influence, which is now making its appearance in the Swiss press." It said: "We do not want to say that Swiss papers are being bought with American money. The honor of the Swiss press is undoubted by us. However, it is remarkable that the Agence Télégraphique Suisse is publishing, in addition to Wolff, Havas, Reuter, etc., articles from an American service marked 'A. S.' in the Swiss papers. This American Service is organized in an absolutely proper manner—that is, the American *communiqués*, mostly of an economical nature, are sent out by a bureau in Berne. It is obvious that they paint the conditions in America in the rosiest colors. This American Service, which is well equipped

with governmental means, cablegrams, and everything necessary to a modern press bureau, is being conducted by a young lady, who has recently visited all the leading Swiss editors. In the near future there will probably appear in the Swiss press from the same source longer articles, written by prominent Americans." (There did!) "All this seems to us worthy of notice," they said. They also explained the advantages which they felt we enjoyed over them in our efforts for publicity. "It is an established fact," the *Kölnische Zeitung* said, "that these American [propaganda] aims are being carried out on a large scale, and they [the Americans] are hemmed in by fewer impediments than any other state, because America has not only promised, but is doing its best to provide, Switzerland with supplies. It will be wise to keep an attentive eye on these things." Then again, on July 13th, the German papers reported that "The service of American propaganda which has already been spoken of is rapidly taking fast hold in Switzerland." The American Press Agency was giving, it said, news especially favorable to America, principally notices regarding the intensified preparations in the United States. "This agency calls itself the 'American Service,' and its work is similar to that of 'Reuter' for England and 'Havas' for France."

The *Münchener Augsburger Abendzeitung* published a correspondence on "American Propa-

ganda in Switzerland." It complained that articles were written treating of democracy against autocracy, right against violence. The network of the Entente centers, it said, was considerably strengthened by it—"Not a day passes without articles bragging of American politics." Again the same paper said, "In speaking of American propaganda in Switzerland, which must not be underrated, we have in particular the German-Swiss press in view, which seems to succumb daily to this propaganda, which is so extremely sure of its own ends." It was particularly annoyed that "the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung* [one of the largest and best-thought-of German-Swiss papers] accepts the simplest talk of the fight for right against violence in this complicated war." The editor added, in a note of his own, that this did not prevent idiotic Germans from subscribing to and reading that paper.

The support which the *Gruetlianner*, the leading moderate Socialist paper in Switzerland, began to give to President Wilson and to American policies was laid to what a German paper called "The American Press Propaganda." And, perhaps to ease its own conscience, it comforted itself by explaining, again in that editorial manner so foreign to American readers, that this affair had a peculiar odor of American press corruption and that the dollar began now to roll over Swiss ground, which up to the present had been so clean. One of the Swiss papers, in reprinting

this article, said "That one judges others by one's self."

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* found that "American propaganda under the direction of Miss Vira Whitehouse was very active." Yes, it was!

The German - owned German - Swiss papers masquerading as Swiss added their sarcastic comments to the general complaint. One of them said: "The reader knows the mark 'A. S.' under which the American press information, 'American Service,' is giving out its information to the Swiss press free—all too free! No matter in how one-sided and anti-German manner this propaganda work is carried on, it receives acceptance by the Swiss press, *because*," it complained with exact truth, "*it offers the only information obtainable about the war craze that has taken hold of America.* We have for this reason abstained so far from criticizing the A. S. But if we look more closely at this information service, we do it because, as neutrals wishing to be well informed, we observe grave omissions."

They then scolded and accused us of ill faith because we had not transmitted to them President Wilson's speech against lynching in the United States. "It is hardly admissible," they said, "that the A. S. intercepts an important American message from the President to his people. It may be highly flattering for the neutrals," they pointed out, "if their intelligence and their interests are estimated as just high enough

to give to them again and again information like the following: 'America has wood for millions of years! It will raise an army of twenty-five million men! (*i.e.*, one-fourth of the entire population, women and children included). It has the best and greatest number of shoe-soles,' etc., etc. But, after all, we have some interest to hear the speeches of Wilson, who is more and more praised as the leader of the world's culture."

Our enemies grew still more sarcastic, and gave amusing descriptions of the character of our news. They ridiculed and exaggerated our assertions that "Every ten minutes a munition caisson is made; that during October every three days there would be a 9,000-ton ship launched in a single shipyard; that the factories of a single war manufacturer are turning out every ten minutes [or is it hours? they asked] a completely finished automobile; that daily [or every minute—for, according to them, it was impossible to keep up with the space of time] 50,000 rifles, millions of cartridges, etc., are furnished to the American army; that there are in American ground a billion tons of coal and similar material; that four million trees would be sent to France; that American trousers and boots are growing larger and that the American soldiers love, above all, colored sugar-candy sticks, etc., etc."

Again they were annoyed. The German sympathizers described our news items as claiming impossible things, and complained because "The

managers of this American propaganda are supported by many powerful words from official and semi-official people. In the first place," they scolded, "the naughty Central Powers, who will absolutely not understand that they simply have to disappear with America's entry into the war, are told that America has twenty - five million men able to bear arms!" (The enemy, themselves, exaggerated our power!) "They [the American Service] state that America can feed all the peoples of France, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States, and still furnish rations to all the fighting troops opposing the Prussian militarism. And, as the final apotheosis: Germany is beaten! a roll of drums, flourishing of trumpets. . . . 'Why?' asks the astonished European. You have not to ask; you must believe. Faith transports mountains."

The enemy followed every pro-Entente word in the Swiss press closely. Two prominent writers had taken a phrase from our weekly bulletin and used it about the same time—one in Zurich, one in Basle. The German-owned Swiss papers, and the German papers as well, caught this incident and agitated about it to a considerable extent. This is what one paper had to say:

"An event of recent days gives us much to think about. In Berne an institution has just been created which calls itself 'American Service.' It seems that the Americans conduct this

propaganda in Switzerland on a large scale. We are, though, by the journalistic performances of this American Service, in the agreeable position of knowing its source and of guessing its aims. The event which startled us is the following one: On August 15th there was an article in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* bearing the heading 'America in the War.' It was signed by Mr. L. Schulthess. In this article we found the sentence, 'America's gigantic armaments, her army of millions, her ship-wharves, and Liberty motors have become a reality and will decide the war.' We wondered at this beautiful sentence spoken from the mouth of Mr. Schulthess. But two days later, on August 17th, we found exactly the same sentence in a political article written by Capt. Armin Im Obersteg in Basle. This funny coincidence, not unnaturally, had been overlooked until the *Basler Nachrichten* [pro-German], as well as the *Zürcher Morgen Zeitung* [supposedly German owned] brought this amazing duplicity into due prominence. How did it come about that these two gentlemen, Schulthess and Im Obersteg, drew from the same source which is invisible to other people? Is there any office that sends useful publicity straight into their hands? The question has been raised publicly, but it has not yet been answered in a satisfactory way!"

And so on and on the German press followed our activity and resented and feared our success, and by their abuse and criticism helped to give

even greater publicity to news of American war preparations and accomplishments.

The success of our work with the Swiss press was mainly due, of course, to our great military achievements, which were altering the situation on the battle-front, and showing that the claims made by our service were justified and our statements true. But there were several little local circumstances, too, which were helpful. As the enemy saw, the United States was really doing its best to provide Switzerland with supplies, and Switzerland was dependent upon us for its bread. The purpose of our office was not only to gain publicity for American affairs in Switzerland, but through publicity to bring about a better understanding between the two peoples. I saw the editors of the larger German-Swiss papers, pointed out to them the vital importance to Switzerland of cultivating a friendly feeling in the United States at this time, and proposed that I would send five hundred to a thousand copies of every editorial favorable to America which was published in their papers to the United States, for distribution to our own papers in America, with a request that editorial comments should be made upon them. This simple proposition brought a great response.

Another circumstance that operated a little in our favor was that at this time a Swiss journalist with Entente sympathies had published a book on the German influence in the Swiss press. He

accused a great many papers, which prided themselves on their neutrality, of being subsidized by the Germans. Suits were threatened against him and there was a great deal of public comment about his accusations. It was only common sense to show such papers that in giving prominence to American news they would be disproving the accusations brought against them. But the main reason for our success, apart from our military victories and the interest aroused by them, was, as the enemy himself pointed out, the fact that our service was the only means which the neutral countries and the Central Empires had of obtaining information about American war preparations (war craze, they called it), and, therefore, our news was eagerly accepted and printed everywhere. Its effect was all the greater because it came from an official and responsible source. Our office soon made a reputation for accuracy and fairness. Contrast for a minute the simplicity of our methods with those which were adopted by other countries and urged upon me in the beginning. Under the generally accepted methods, I should have masqueraded as being in Switzerland for some other purpose. I should have written or had written and translated what I wanted to have said. This would have been done secretly. I should then have found corruptible Swiss and would have paid them to attempt to place these articles in the papers as their own compositions. These men

would probably be of no standing in their community and their opinions would have no weight. The next step would have been to buy or subsidize papers, all in secret, in order to obtain a hearing. And I should have gathered about me a number of untrustworthy people who would have had me in their power for any amount of blackmailing. I have seen how such methods work and how impossible and complicated the results are. The loyalty of men who can be bought is not to be trusted. They are at the least ready to desert one master for another whose employ is more profitable. I have been approached many times by the secret workers of other representatives, German as well as Allied, offering to transfer their efforts to me because they found that there was more general interest in the news given out openly by the American Service than in their own secretly manufactured articles. And one of the tragically amusing incidents of my experience in Switzerland was the readiness which some of the German-controlled groups and papers showed in trying to sell out to us at the first whisper of approaching German failure. They came, one after another, offering under various plausible pretexts to give us their support in exchange for financial backing. But our policy was undeviating. We bought no buildings, business, nor persons, and gave no subsidies to enemies or neutrals. Not one United States cent ever went to gain publicity

of any sort in Switzerland in a secret or illegal manner.

Although our chief attention was given to the news service, there were various other activities, accepted methods of propaganda campaigning, which we adopted. They all had their peculiar difficulties; for instance, photographic materials were bad and hard to obtain on account of war conditions, and photographic work was slow. But every nation represented in Switzerland rivaled the other in its use of war photographs. They appeared not only in illustrated papers and magazines, but were displayed in shop windows and in little cases hung along the arcaded streets. The Swiss public had a queer habit of gathering around such displays, during the free noon-hours, in the snow-storms of winter and the glare of summer under the protection of the arcades. The Germans were especially active and successful in all uses of war photographs. But we were proud of the quickness with which our photographs of war events were enlarged, reproduced, and distributed. We very soon had them displayed in thirty-three cities and seventy-seven places. The printing of the titles and the appearance of our exhibitions seemed to us to outdistance that of any other country, including Germany. But the main difference in our exhibits was that every onlooker knew that they came from an accredited committee of the United

States and had not descended mysteriously from the sky overnight.

The distribution of Sunday newspapers and picture magazines to hotels, reading-rooms, universities, and the like had developed into quite a science. We joined this game, too, of course, and had an advantage because of our great illustrated Sunday newspaper supplements. The difficulty here was to keep them on hand after they were distributed, because it was an easy matter for an enemy agent to go about and take them away. But even the distribution of such material was not simple. The other countries did it anonymously. If any paper of theirs contained an attack on the enemy, which was against the Swiss neutrality laws, no one could be held responsible, because the distributors were unknown. But every one knew that the Committee on Public Information was responsible for distributing the American papers. Suppose a single word offended against the Swiss neutrality laws! The Germans would discover it and complain. We would be in jeopardy of trial, or of expulsion, or of some terrible unknown penalty. And diplomatic fears would be realized! What could we do? The solution was to put the responsibility upon the Swiss government itself. We obtained their consent to turn over to them everything sent to us for distribution, to be read first by them and censored before we sent it out; and this they did with the greatest consideration and

despatch. Several of our patriotic Sunday papers were far from neutral and were systematically suppressed! This kindly censoring was a great assistance to us, but must have been a real burden to the overworked, busy Swiss department.

One of the first questions that had been brought to my attention on arriving in Switzerland was the excessive use of pamphlets by the Germans and by the Allies. But we found that there was still a demand for information in this form. We published a number of pamphlets, but, in contrast to the usual anonymous method, did not hesitate to send them to all the officials of the Swiss government and to editors, professors, and other leaders of opinion with the compliments of the Committee on Public Information.

The very name of the Committee on Public Information seemed to invite requests for information of all sorts from editors, writers, speakers, and others. We found ourselves at the greatest disadvantage in trying to answer such queries. Supplies and information came to us from America as slowly as assistants did, and for two months our entire library consisted of one last year's *World Almanac*. How I envied the Germans their facilities! While it took us months to get even those things we cabled for, their books, papers, and information could be sent in a day's time across the frontier and could be used in their native tongue. They did not have to struggle, as we did, with translations and trans-

lators. The Swiss told me that the German response to requests for information or for books and pamphlets was instantaneous. They had an office in Zurich, which was ostensibly a publishing-house, for the sole purpose of circularizing. They provided free books of any character to any one of standing who applied. Occasional questionnaires, which were masterpieces of efficiency, were sent to the Swiss who were on their lists, asking in the most polite way if the information already given by their office had been of use, inquiring what character of information might be wanted in future, and in what other way the office could be of service. My heart sank when I thought how long it might be before we could compete with them in this department. In other departments, too, it was much the same thing, but we planned always for increased efficiency in the future.

Of course, many of our plans came to nothing. In the beginning we had feared that we could not obtain a hearing for our news in the papers, or that we could not count on a continuance of it. My British confrère, after warning me in concert with every other official representative and diplomat, that the papers would never take news or articles offered openly, as ours were, explained our first success on the ground of its novelty. Soon the papers would become used to us, he said, and the A. S. would drop from sight.

Perhaps there was something in this predic-

tion, I thought, although I could not believe it. But it was well to be prepared for every emergency. If the papers would not continue to publish our news, it should reach the Swiss in other ways and through them reach the Germans, too. The best thing to do was to follow the example of our experienced and astute enemy, and even go beyond it and improve upon it. We saw that they had bill-posters placed at every advantageous spot throughout Switzerland—at the junctions of street-car lines, for instance, where everybody would stop to read their news. On those posters the military victories of the Central Powers were blazoned forth until toward the end of September, when I rejoiced to see that the boards were left bare, for even German ingenuity could not then twist the military events of the western front into German victories. We made careful and tactful plans for a poster campaign. We found that we could not advertise bare facts on posters in Switzerland; it would be against its neutrality laws. The Germans advertised their news as quotations from their German-owned Swiss newspapers. We could announce facts on our posters by ostensibly advertising our pamphlets and our motion-picture films, and thus the public would become acquainted with America's preparations and achievements. But as our news continued to appear increasingly in the press, we postponed, and finally abandoned, the idea of the poster campaign as superfluous.

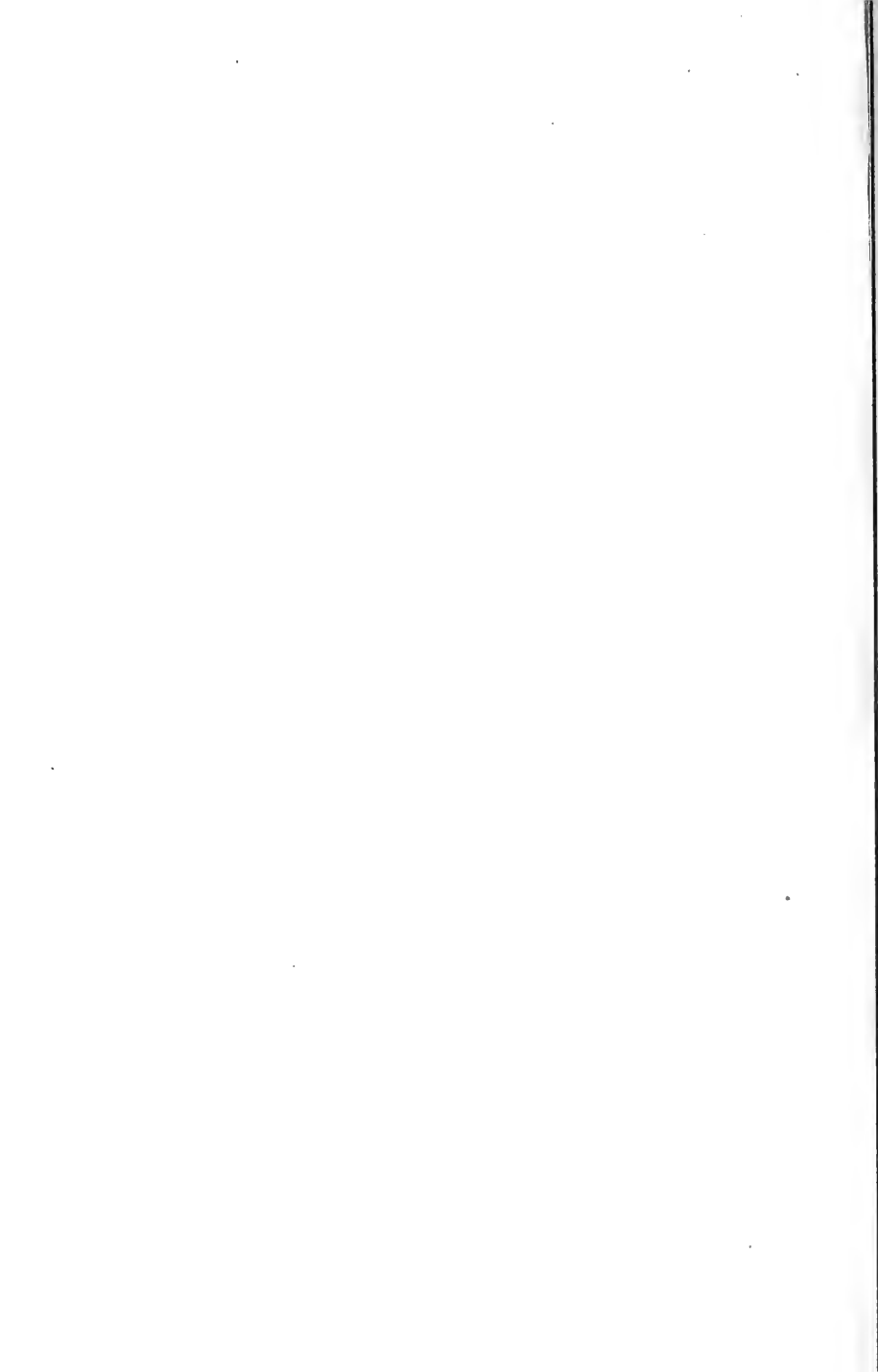
It was really the motion-picture situation that was to prove one of the most troublesome of my efforts. It was recognized by all the Allies as an important means of propaganda, although up to this time it had been left almost entirely to the Germans. Practically every cinema-house in German Switzerland was supposed to be owned or controlled by German interests. German propaganda films and romantic films setting forth the virtues and greatnesses of the German people were freely displayed and the Swiss audiences saw in the German-made news films such things as lines of innumerable sad Allied captives being marched off to German prison-camps. The Allies agreed that this situation must be actively combated. The plans I had early made in our own behalf were superseded by the formation of an inter-Allied committee. We held many meetings, but, as in all inter-Allied efforts, work progressed very slowly, because of the conflicting interests and opinions. There were differences as to the policy of renting or selling films to the enemy, of allowing Allied films to be shown with enemy films, of the effect a combined blacklist would produce. I found myself standing out alone against the gentlemen who represented the other nations, and having my protests read into the minutes of our meetings. However, the very idea of concerted Allied action had so great an effect that one of the strongly entrenched cinema-house companies, supposedly German controlled,

offered for immediate sale its whole string of houses.

One of the questions over which there was no dispute in the inter-Allied committee was that every story film with a commercial value should be rented or sold in Switzerland, only under the agreement that a certain percentage of news or propaganda film should be shown with it. The Italian stories would carry Italian propaganda, etc. The question arose as to whether American story films in Switzerland were in reality British, because they were sold from America to British firms and reprinted in England on English stock, or in reality French because the method of renting them on the Continent was through French firms with rights for Switzerland and other countries. If they were British, they should be rented in Switzerland to be shown with British news or propaganda; if French, the news or propaganda should be French. The only thing that seemed certain was that because of commercial arrangements and foreign rights they were *not* American. While this and many other questions were being discussed, the Committee on Public Information made ready for action. We actually had delivered directly to Switzerland, with exclusive rights for that country, several hundred reels of story films, truly American, and enough American news or propaganda films to show with them, all unconnected in any way with British or French commerce, and ready to be presented in Switzer-



A LUCERNE MILKMAN



land as a complete American program. The British agent protested. He seemed to feel that all American films—even those that had never been near England—ought to be British property, but he did not push his protests.

I was instructed to see and censor each film myself personally before releasing it to be shown to the public. It would have meant at least every day all day long for three weeks! Thus is one's work planned from a distance of three thousand miles! What would have happened to all my other activities?—and there were a hundred or so, each one seeming to me more important than the other? Just at this time one of my promised assistants from the American Expeditionary Forces arrived and gave several weeks to inspecting and censoring the films and thus saved the situation.

I worked out alternate plans for concerted allied or independent action with the films, but the plans were never put into operation, because the Allied committee had come to no agreement when the necessity of controlling the film situation ceased at the signing of the armistice.

The difficulties which delayed the work with the films was not only with the Allies. There were our own departments to add to the confusion. Mr. Dresel, who had formerly been the Red Cross representative, had now become the representative of the War Trade Board. He saw some impropriety in the films having been

sent to me rather than to him. Although they were commercial films, they had been sent to me not primarily for commercial reasons, but because I needed them to help in my propaganda work. They were still subject to the War Trade Board's control, to be released to only such firms as would sign certain guarantees demanded by it. The War Trade Board's form was to be signed by its own representatives, and here I, not Mr. Dresel, was in possession of the films! I offered to transfer them to him, or go through any formality he could suggest in order quickly to conform to the necessary red-tape. I was meek. I was ready to do anything if only I could put my films to use. But Mr. Dresel would not agree. He had not been especially instructed to co-operate! He must wait for directions from his own department in America. So all action was delayed—uselessly, it seemed to me, until cables¹ were exchanged and he had received explicit instructions to co-operate. Mr. Dresel also brought up the question of paying duties to the Swiss government on these films and wrote that he had nothing to do with that! I had not thought of duties! The films had come through the diplomatic pouch and had avoided the payment of duties on entering the country. That little sentence in Mr. Dresel's letter seemed to present this question as a most tangled and difficult one. Was there a little malice in it? I had no intention of

¹ Appendices XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, and XXXI.

smuggling. What was to be done? Here again I found there was advantage in not being diplomatic. I said nothing to our officials, but took the direct course and went simply to the Swiss department in charge of import duties. I explained that I had had a great quantity of films sent through the diplomatic pouch. I told why they had been sent in that way and why I needed them. I said I wanted to pay the duty. My story was listened to with the greatest courtesy, and here, as always with every department of the Swiss government, I found a helpful spirit. All trouble was taken from me; a representative was sent from the Swiss department to my office and I was surprised to find that duty was charged not on the value, but on the weight of the films, including the packing, and the wooden boxes in which they had come and their own tin cases. It was altogether an insignificant amount.

Such petty conflicts are merely examples taken at haphazard of innumerable incidents which made the work of every American department in Switzerland more than necessarily difficult.

The legation, greatly increased as its activities were by the war, was the only one of the departments that was permanent. The others, which were organized because of the war, were the Red Cross, the War Trade Board, the Passport or Military Intelligence Division, the Army Pur-

chasing and Quartermaster's Department, and the Committee on Public Information. All except the War Trade Board and the legation had separate offices. There seemed to be constant friction and difficulty between many of them. A recommendation to meet this situation had been made by the representatives of the United States army on their visit of inspection to Switzerland. It was that there should be a weekly meeting of the heads of all of the departments, in hopes that with general discussions of our common problems, and with a better understanding, there would develop some spirit of co-operation. It was obvious that it was needed. The legation, tenacious of its prestige, was the only department which could call such meetings. We hoped it would be done, but weeks and months went by and, although the plan was much discussed, it was never put into operation and we continued to the end to go our separate and disjointed ways. We were out of touch with our country and its idealism—most of us felt no reflection of its patriotic spirit of sacrifice. Little rivalries and petty jealousies grew and thrived in the strained atmosphere and acquired an importance they did not merit. All that was needed, I think, was one man big enough to gather together the various elements and remind us that we should be working in harmony in a common cause in the greatest crisis of civilization. Our lack of co-operation and all the unnecessary friction seemed tragic in

comparison with the force and unity of the enemy, as I met it at every step in my own work. Their whole propaganda effort was organized with a clearly defined policy and it had been developing for thirty, forty, or fifty years. It was conducted by an enormous staff thoroughly trained to its work. It had the united support of the government and the officials and the people. There were no demoralizing congressional investigations of German propaganda activities at home, as there probably were no petty obstructions and conflicts in Berne. They were dangerous enemies. Not only had they invaded the newspaper field and captured the motion-picture industry, but theaters and opera-houses everywhere in Switzerland were said to have been bought outright or subsidized by them. Gossip credited the little opera-house in Berne with having received \$150,000 for the winter of 1917-18. German plays and operas were given by a company of German actors, actresses, and singers, and it was freely stated that the efforts of these people were not confined to their professional duties.

Some of the German plans for arousing sympathy were entirely legitimate. For years they had been perfecting a system of university exchange which not only encouraged an interchange of professors between German and Swiss universities, but allowed students going from a university in one country to one in the other

country to retain their class rank without the formality of examinations.

In fact, they neglected no means of propaganda, no matter how indirect.

Great attention was given to the industrial field. They had begun to build a chain of houses for commercial purposes throughout Switzerland, which agitated and greatly alarmed some of our allies. They held exhibits of art—German art!—everywhere. They had a fashion show in Basle which frightened the French into putting the greatest efforts into a similar exhibition of winter styles in Zurich. All this is a mere suggestion of the way in which they conducted their propaganda, and touches only their simpler activities with which my own work brought me into touch. I say nothing of the side of their campaign which resulted in the placing of bombs in the Zurich station and the discovery of others in the German consular building in Zurich, which were said to be meant for use in Italy, together with an enormous amount of Bolshevik literature; the literature was carefully prepared, it seemed, to weaken the morale of the Italian soldier. I shall not attempt even to mention the rumors of other efforts which the Germans made, in addition to their newspaper propaganda, to stir social discontent in foreign countries, neutral as well as enemy, at the time when they believed themselves secure in their own Prussian autocracy.

Such efforts were in line with their activities with which we were already so familiar in our own country and in Mexico. Their force was felt everywhere in Switzerland. It needed, indeed, a united and harmonious effort on our part if we could hope to meet and combat it adequately.

CHAPTER VIII

ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER

MY own difficulties were not confined to combating German propaganda or to my routine office-work. Time was the most precious thing I had, and much of it was wasted in listening to propositions that were impossible, if they were not downright dishonest. An unfounded rumor had spread about that I had unusual power over the funds at my command. It was apparently considered legitimate to approach me with any kind of plan and call it propaganda. Schemes carefully worked out and artfully presented seemed endless. I became acquainted with every manner of approach—with roundabout insinuations almost too indefinite to catch; with appeals of the friendly sort; with suggestions conveying a threat; even with downright demands in an overbearing manner. These approaches were made by men either so well introduced that I could not refuse to see them, or by men I knew well. I felt that I was kept busy defending Uncle Sam's purse. For instance, purely commercial enterprises established by

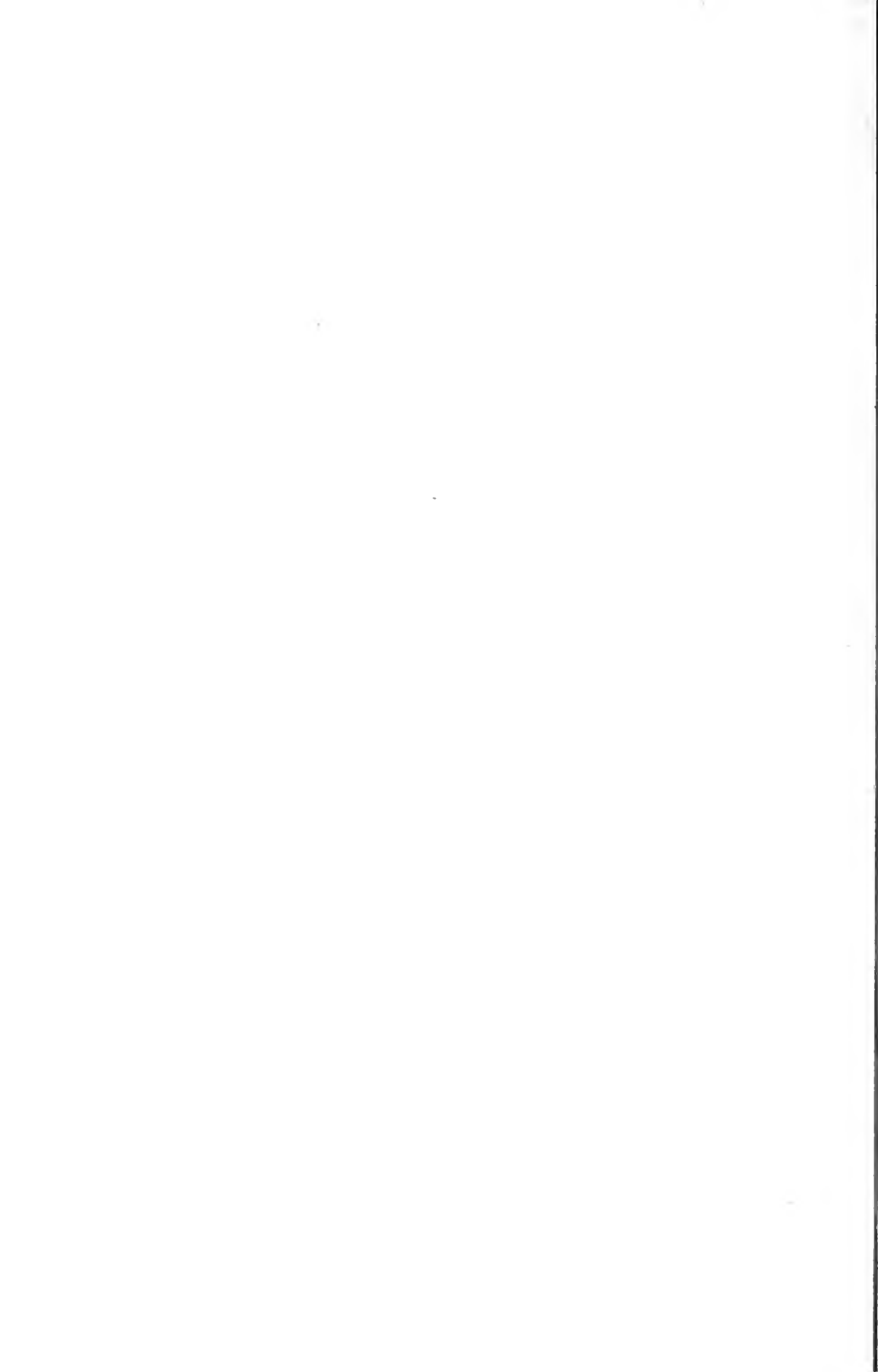
citizens of Allied countries would ask, with the support of their own government officials, for an American subsidy on the plea of Allied co-operation and propaganda. Book-shops established by commercial houses wanted subsidies because they were ready to sell American books if we would provide them, and any one could see, they said, that that was propaganda! Suggestions were made that an inter-Allied magazine should be started with a large government fund, which I probably was to supply!—to acquaint the world with Allied art, literature, and politics. The war would soon be over and the magazine would no longer be of use to the Allied governments and would naturally come with its influence and possessions into the hands of those people who had organized it—among whom, of course, I would be one of those to profit.

The plan which had the strongest backing and aroused my greatest indignation was the proposed formation of an inter-Allied club—men's club, of course. The project included buying a building in Berne, the first floor of which was already occupied by a French news agency. This news agency made a feature of showing in its window bulletins of the latest war news, war photographs, and maps of the war fronts, and, at the time of the thrilling Allied advances, it undoubtedly did good work and attracted crowds. It, too, had the backing of its own government and sought support from other Allied

governments. The first plan was merely to hire offices for the news agency in several of the German-Swiss cities on the most prominent streets, and there, as in Berne, display the news bulletins and war photographs and maps. I had consented to help with the expense of establishing and maintaining such offices, but as it was clear to me at that time that the war was drawing to a close, I undertook to do so for periods of only three months at a time. I was surprised to find that the news agency had been directed to contract for the rent of properties for periods of not less than two years. This news agency with which we had become familiar was used as the excuse for proposing the inter-Allied club. The building in which it was situated might be bought by the Germans. The buying power of the Germans was an ever-present threat! It was always presented with every proposed plan. If we did not do it, the Germans would. In fact, the Germans were going to do it, anyway, and the only way to forestall them was to hurry and do it first, and the decision must be made within twenty-four hours. That was the regular formula! Sometimes the time limit was even extended to forty-eight hours. Oh, the papers, the magazines, the offices, the cinema-houses, theaters, opera-houses—everything that the Germans were to buy! I wondered what their budget must be. Well, the Germans were going to buy this particular building, and if they bought it



LUCERNE. THE NEW BRIDGE, WITH THE PILATUS



the French news agency must move. The French director, a distinguished gentleman who had formerly been in the Foreign Office, would at that abandon his work and all would be lost! Hence the building must be bought by us. And after it was bought it would be used for the inter-Allied club. But it was expensive. The price was 400,000 Swiss francs, or, at the war-time rate of exchange, about 100,000 American dollars. How could the money be raised? The French director undertook to raise a portion of it himself—by putting a mortgage on the property, I discovered! The remainder of the sum was to be provided by me from the fund of the Committee on Public Information! By whom this project was decided in the first place, I do not know, but I do know that it was developed in detail at one of the characteristic diplomatic meetings, or luncheons, which, I was told, was attended by many of the more active Allied representatives. Several days before the meeting I had been taken out to luncheon at a secluded little restaurant down by the river's bank by one of our American representatives, to meet the French director and to hear it all explained in the most glowing terms. I paid little attention, as my part in the matter had not yet dawned upon me. That interview was preparatory. It was to arouse my interest, if possible. A few days later the American representative came alone to see me and explained what was expected of me. I was prompt in my

answer. I looked upon the project with disfavor. I saw no propaganda in it. But the promoters of this plan were not tame. I should not be allowed too easily to spoil it. This particular representative said, significantly, that his department had been asked to make a report on American propaganda in Switzerland, and he could report that I was neglecting big opportunities and, undoubtedly, he himself would be authorized to undertake the work in my place. I offered no objections to that, but I remained firm that I would and could have nothing to do with such schemes. That was not to be the end. Immediately after the meeting I was approached by two other of our most prominent American representatives. One was a member of the Red Cross Commission, the other is a diplomat and had been the chief opponent of my plan to work openly. How did diplomatic caution come to fail him here? And why did he come on such a mission? I believe all of these men had drifted into supporting this project from a feeling of good-fellowship skilfully aroused by the adroit and attractive French director of the news agency. They had probably been led through pleasant social interviews into undertaking to show what they could do for so kind a host. One of them, I am told, had said, "Leave Mrs. Whitehouse to me!" Certainly the diplomat himself would never have even recommended such a plan to his own department. But the two Americans came to my office and they

urged the scheme. They saw from the beginning that I was opposed. Their manner became emphatic. Their scorn was great, that so good a plan should be balked by me. The voice of one was loud. "Yes," said the Red Cross Commissioner, "if the war were not so apparently near its end, I myself would provide the money." His tone was that of a very rich man who had found that wealth has a prestige. Physical size, a ruddy skin, a loud voice—none of which I possess—seemed assets in such a situation. I wondered if I was being browbeaten. I sat back in my chair and grew angry. Sonny growled. Perhaps the diplomats are right and I am an aggressive woman. I felt aggressive then. I said that I, too, thought the war was too near an end for the Committee on Public Information to undertake any such scheme, even if it had been in itself a good scheme. In my opinion it was a bad one. Trouble could brew in such a club with some of our hotheads. And it could not by any feat of imagination be twisted into propaganda or a suitable thing for me to undertake. And there, after all, was the government's policy against buying papers, people, or buildings for propaganda purposes in a foreign country. No, I'd have nothing to do with it.

There were other accepted methods I would have nothing to do with. Entertaining was a popular means of "putting things over." When I first opened my office I was told of the impor-

tance of having a large entertaining fund in my budget. A former member of the Red Cross, in telling me how necessary it was, said that in France the Red Cross had been forced into raising a special sum for that purpose, as they found it was impossible to conduct business without it. And, of course, I was told that it was done by the other propaganda representatives. And it was! In fact, one of the Allied agents entertained so extensively and elaborately that he became known as the propagandist of banquets and was said to be conducting a champagne offensive. One of the Allied governments was supposed to have sent a wealthy couple to Switzerland mainly to entertain; and they did it constantly, elaborately, and well at the Bellevue Palace. I was naturally prejudiced against such methods. Entertaining bored me, but I did not want to be influenced by my own prejudices, or stubbornly to reject means that others found useful. I carefully considered it. I questioned the Swiss people I had grown to know and the German democrats. I kept my eyes and ears open. And I want to go on record against government entertaining except on special and rare occasions.

I found that at such functions no one talked business, or, if he did, it was not until after luncheon or dinner, when some of the men might have had too much to eat or drink and were led, through good-fellowship, into agreements and plans which they were not willing afterward to

keep, and trouble resulted more often than not. There were other bad features, too. Snobbishness could not be kept out. The most valuable people who did not have well-cut evening coats could not be asked with those who had, and the petty gossip which flourished in Switzerland, resulting so frequently in antagonisms between departments of the same country or those of Allied countries, undoubtedly often arose from the stories which were told and the idle discussions which took place at these entertainments.

My opposition to entertaining kept me apart and simplified my life. In the months I spent in Switzerland I made only one exception. It was when the six Swiss journalists, who were going to America as guests of the Committee on Public Information, met to talk over the details of their trip. They were busy men who came from Zurich, Basle, Lausanne, and Geneva, and it saved time to have them meet at luncheon in Berne, where we made out their program and discussed only business arrangements.

Although I escaped the complications which entertaining entailed, there were always unforeseen difficulties to keep me busy. One of the features of working in Switzerland was that whenever you thought everything was finally and smoothly settled another difficulty was sure to arise. The mission of the six Swiss gentlemen to America, which seemed in the beginning so simple a thing to arrange, was a typical instance.

It was like the "House that Jack Built"—the arrangements for it went on and on. They seemed never-ending. In fact, it took almost three months of daily effort on my part to get these gentlemen started, and at the very moment of their sailing the trip came within an ace of having to be abandoned.

The choice of the gentlemen was a difficulty in itself. President Calonder, as he promised at our first interview, had given much time to selecting six of the most prominent leaders of opinion in Switzerland as the men who would be of greatest value to both Switzerland and America on this mission. They were considered from every political and religious standpoint. The head of the Agricultural party, known as the Peasants' Christ, the most distinguished professor, the most distinguished writer, the leader of the majority in the House, the owner of one of the most important national newspapers, and the leader of Catholic opinion, were finally selected. Professor Rappard was to accompany them. Mr. Sulzer, the Swiss Minister to the United States, had then returned to Switzerland on business of importance, and, although he was pressed for time and had many delicate and complicated questions to settle, he generously gave his support to this mission and did everything in his power to help. He, Professor Rappard, and I had many conferences. Each man who was invited took time to consider the invita-

tion. No one could make up his mind to go or not to go. We asked them to meetings. We begged for decisions. One of them had not had a holiday for twenty years, nor had he once broken his habit of getting up at four o'clock in the morning; he was afraid to try it. Another could not go because his wife objected. Another found his professional duties kept him in Switzerland. These explanations began to come on the day on which the Germans advertised the sinking of the *Vaterland* (which was never sunk) and announced an enormous amount of tonnage which they claimed they had recently destroyed by submarines. I wondered impatiently if our invited guests had been influenced by such reports; but I dismissed my suspicions as unworthy in view of the character of the men. It was easy to understand that the voyage across the ocean so simple to us who were used to it must have seemed at the least an uncertain and difficult undertaking to them.

After more consultations and delays, it was decided that three only of the original six who had been asked should go. And then the news was broken to me that two of these gentlemen, while they wanted to go, did not want to accept the invitation as coming from the Committee on Public Information, because they feared people would think that, having gone as guests of a government propaganda department, anything they wrote about America on their

return should be looked upon with suspicion. Various ways of avoiding this difficulty were suggested: The invitation might come from the State Department, or might be issued by Congress itself, or, whereas it might in reality be the invitation of the Committee on Public Information, it should be given in the name of the Carnegie Peace Endowment, or on the part of some American university organization. I was considerably ruffled by these proposals. I explained that I had no authority to speak for any department or organization except the one I was representing. I said that it was a delicate matter to explain to a department of the government that, while it was to bear the responsibility of the success of the proposed trip, manage all the details, stand all the expenses, take all the trouble, its guests did not want to be associated with it publicly. You see, reports of the attacks in the press and Congress of the United States on the Committee on Public Information had reached Switzerland. In view of the complications which arose and of the reluctance of these gentlemen, I decided to change the character of the mission and to send to America, instead of the statesmen, representatives of the six largest newspapers in Switzerland. Mr. Sulzer, helpful as always, wrote to each of the papers, explaining the importance of the project. It seemed that we had found an easy way out of our difficulties. Trained journalists should not

have conscientious scruples of the kind with which I had been struggling on the part of the statesmen. Members of the proposed first mission vacillated even after they had refused our invitations, and it seemed at one time as if there would be two Swiss missions ready to start for the United States at the same time. But the statesmen finally with reluctance abandoned the idea of going. We had meetings of the journalists to consider what they wanted to see, and, although each one wanted to see different things, we made a tentative program which I cabled and wrote in the greatest detail to America. The difficulties of obtaining the passports of these gentlemen and having them visaed seemed at one time almost insurmountable. Each man's history and connections were looked into through a magnifying-glass. When their passports were finally visaed and they were on the very eve of leaving Switzerland, an Allied country discovered and complained that the brother of one of the editors had been a traveling salesman for a Swiss commercial house, and was believed to have gone into Germany, or at least into Alsace, at one time during the war! And the editor himself had made an application for a passport to go into Germany the following May. This circumstance almost broke up the party. Another difficulty arose because another of the editors, who was known to be sincerely pro-Entente in his sympathies, and who had the

reputation of being one of the most distinguished writers in Switzerland, had advocated an early and separate peace with Austria without the disruption of that country, for fear that further disorganization within its boundaries would help the spread of Bolshevism. The Italians believed him, therefore, to be pro-Austrian and anti-Italian, and protested to me against his going to America. A solemn committee called upon me. They appealed to me on the ground of the Allies standing together against the enemy. When I saw no point to their protest and held to my plans, they said they would take the matter to the American legation. And this I believe they did, but without results. The American legation had no control over my activities. But there were other dangers. The editors themselves hesitated to cross the ocean. I was asked if I meant to insure them. I answered that, since the German submarine campaign had failed and the danger was truly negligible, there was no necessity of insurance. But they foresaw perils and insured themselves at enormous premiums. The insurance companies, at least, profited by the German propaganda.

A further difficulty was discovered by Mr. Melville E. Stone, president of the Associated Press, who was going through Switzerland on a sight-seeing tour. Mr. Stone was no friend of the Committee on Public Information. He suddenly found a grave danger in six Swiss gentlemen

traveling through the United States. About this time the German propaganda was giving enormous publicity to President Wilson's speech against lynching. Their exaggerated agitation made it appear almost as if lynchings of peaceful German-born, of sincere pacifists, even of simple neutrals, were daily, hourly, occurrences here in America. Perhaps Mr. Melville E. Stone had been reached by this German propaganda, but, anyway, he went to Professor Rappard with his story of the danger not of lynching, of course, but of insult to which the Swiss journalists would be exposed. War feeling was running high in America. Public opinion was inflamed against Germans and German speech. Four of our journalists were from German Switzerland and spoke a dialect which would sound like German to the untrained American ear. No one could tell what might happen. Everybody became wrought up. Again the mission seemed on the point of being abandoned. The Swiss journalists themselves showed no keenness for being lynched or even insulted in America after having been drowned in the ocean by submarines. It seemed to me the most absurd excitement in the world. Mr. Melville E. Stone found a way out of it. He thought the delegation would be safe if Professor Rappard, who speaks English as well as you and I do, should go as a protector. He made this suggestion to Professor Rappard and insisted upon it. This was a few days before the delega-

tion was to start. I had been limited to six, and there were six journalists. I had also engaged accommodations on the train from Switzerland to Paris and from Paris to Bordeaux and steamer accommodations to New York all for six only. There was almost no way of providing accommodations for an extra traveler. And Professor Rappard himself had obligations which would prevent his going. I was so firm in my contention that the gentlemen would be safe in America that it was finally decided they should go, even without Professor Rappard.

When everything was settled, I left for Paris ahead of the mission. It was my first visit there since I had opened the office in Switzerland, the end of June, and there were many matters for me to attend to. The wireless news service should be sent more quickly; we needed more still photographs; the weekly allotment of news films from the American front was not coming as we had expected, and there were motion-picture experts with whom I should consult. There were delays in the diplomatic pouch, which might be lessened if the military officer couriers could bring the bag for Switzerland from Washington to Brest, and if I could establish connections from Brest to Switzerland. I wanted fresh news stories from the American front. I wanted to arrange to send other Swiss journalists on trips to the American front and to see our preparations in France. In fact, there were many details to

be worked out with various American departments in Paris. It was fortunate I went. The Swiss journalists could never have gotten off without my further efforts. The American passport office in Berne had believed that it was complying with all regulations when it visaed the passports through Paris to America, but it proved to be necessary, if any traveler remained in Paris over one train connection, to have his passport re-visaed there. The program of our Swiss editors called for a two days' stop. They were being entertained at dinner by the Swiss legation and the French Maison de la Presse, and Ambassador Sharpe was making a speech to them at a luncheon at the Crillon. But there were difficulties in the way of having their passports re-visaed. The American military intelligence representatives in Paris said that the American military intelligence representatives in Switzerland had not even notified them of the mission, and therefore it would be necessary for these gentlemen to wait in Paris until communications could be received from Switzerland. Some of them, too, seemed to be on the military blacklist and there was a question as to whether their passports would be visaed at all. Our Allies must have taken their complaints to Paris when I would not listen to them in Berne. The civil branch of the American passport office in Paris also maintained that some formality had not been complied with and that the trip could not

proceed. There was a great deal of red-tape about citizens of a neutral country going to America. Special permission had to be obtained from the State Department in Washington. The necessary permission had been cabled to Switzerland, but the authorities in Paris did not know it. Any communication with Switzerland, even by telegram, might take a week, and at best would take several days. To catch their steamer the journalists must leave Paris for Bordeaux the next night! If they missed it their whole carefully planned tour in America would be put out of joint and there was no telling when accommodations for six to cross the ocean could again be obtained. The journalists were all busy men with important work in Switzerland. Their trip had been planned with great exactitude as to time, and they were most of them under obligation to return within two months. If it was postponed because of some miserable red-tape, it would probably have to be abandoned—and certainly there would have been no increase of good feeling on the part of the Swiss press toward the United States. What of all the boasted American efficiency which was to help win the war?

Everywhere that day in all the offices I was told it could not be done. I grew more determined that it should be done. I went to Ambassador Sharpe's house and enlisted his assistance, and the embassy gave its support. But there was still the Military Intelligence. Without their

consent the mission could not sail. I determined to appeal to General Nolan himself. He was at Chaumont, the American military headquarters. Late that night I tried to reach him on the American military telephone. To do so, I went into the office of the Committee on Public Information in the Élysée Palace, which had been taken over by the American army forces. Going into the Élysée Palace at night was not an easy thing to do. Nothing was easy! There again you had to have passes and again submit to all sorts of red-tape. Mr. Kerney thought my effort was useless, but he kindly consented to help with the red-tape details and went with me. We succeeded in passing the barriers and the guards. We reached his office. We put in our call. The answer came almost instantaneously. General Nolan was at the front. It was the day after the front had moved from St.-Mihiel. But he would probably return by twelve o'clock, or some assistant to whom I could speak would call me later. We sat and waited in the office.

It was while we were there waiting that I heard how one of our young soldiers felt in going "over the top." He was a boy from the Marines who had been wounded at Château-Thierry. When he was discharged from the hospital he was put at light work as a guard in the Élysée Palace. In going on his rounds he looked in and joined us, and while we waited he talked to us. He told us how he had been wounded. It had

happened the very first time he went over the top. He told us how frightened he had been. He said the noise was terrible. His hair stood on end. He made a joke about his tin helmet. He told us how he had stood there in the trench and felt he could not, could not go. But he looked up, and there on the top stood his captain. "Gee! he stood there all alone. He wasn't afraid, and he said, just as calm, but with a thrill in his voice: 'Boys, we're going to get the Germans, if we go to Berlin! Will you come with me?'" They went. Our wounded boy said that he forgot for a time to be frightened. Then he told us of his brother. He called him "buddy." They had grown up together, he said, had enlisted together and trained together. They jumped out of the trench side by side. He stopped in his story. After a minute he told us he had never seen a dead person before, and there his buddy, his own buddy, whom he had never left in all his life, not even for one night, was shot dead before his eyes. Oh, his face! Again, he said, the noise was terrible and again he was frightened, but there was his captain leading the way and he went on, following somehow until he felt he was stumbling and forgot everything. He, too, had been shot. In the hospital he had terrible dreams. He dreamed and dreamed of his buddy falling there. The nurses were good to him. Now that he was out of the hospital, he did not want to go back to the

front—he felt he couldn't. But if he was sent—I think he meant to say he would get even with the Germans for his brother's death, but the telephone rang and off he went on his rounds, and I talked over the telephone to a captain in the censorship office at Chaumont about the Swiss journalists' passports. The captain was very tired and he seemed to me to be making difficulties. I was insistent. He said, finally, that he would see what could be done and would notify the Military Intelligence in Paris in the morning. Well, my Swiss journalists did get off! But, as in a nightmare, when all the difficulties seemed to have been arranged, we found at the very last minute that their passports had not been stamped with the American visas. In the confusion, that formality had been forgotten! The oversight was rectified in a hurry and they caught their train at the last minute; and again I returned to Berne. They saw something of our great work at Bordeaux, and wrote back accounts of it to the Swiss papers. They arrived in America on schedule time and met only courtesy and hospitality from the American public. Mr. Melville Stone's alarms had been unfounded. They saw our wonders. If the armistice had not come before their return to Switzerland, their stories and accounts would have had a significant place in hurrying the end of the war.

CHAPTER IX

SWISS PROBLEMS

ONE of the other things, as I have told you, which took me to Paris, was to arrange to send other Swiss journalists on trips to see our work in France. I knew that if they could see for themselves the gigantic scale of American operations back of the line in the service of supplies, the enormous docks, the miles of warehouses, the new railroad system, and all that we had constructed in France—if they could go to the front and see our activities there, they could tell through the medium of the Swiss press such facts to the Germans as would go far, also, toward bringing the war to an end. My endeavor to send these groups was one of the things that wasted time and effort. It was recommended and planned, indorsed and postponed; one department agreed to it and approved it, another feared it and disapproved it. Of course I had no way of judging the military dangers of such expeditions. I could only judge the news value. I have told you enough for you to see the atmosphere of suspicion and distrust that existed among the

Allies as regards all those neutrals who were not accepted and recognized as Allied sympathizers. It was my idea that in choosing people to send on such expeditions it was wise to select not those already known as Allied sympathizers, but influential men of neutral standing, whose reports and opinions would carry greater weight in the enemy countries, as well as in Switzerland, and I believed we could find men of such character that they could not easily be spies, ready to betray a country whose hospitality they accepted. But again my view was not the usual one, and my plans for these trips to France were finally rejected or postponed indefinitely.

I believe the general distrust of unknown neutrals was, on the whole, justified, because of the extraordinary manner in which the Germans had penetrated into the neutral countries with their propaganda. It was they who had set the style of masquerading. In Switzerland, of course, they masqueraded as Swiss, and when you thought you were dealing with the Swiss, it might easily turn out that you were dealing with German agents. And suppose I should select, in the guise of a neutral Swiss, a German agent equipped to obtain special information, and invite him on such a mission as I proposed to send to France! I was careful to inquire even then what harm he could do, since the mission would always be accompanied by American officers. He might, it seemed, find ways to communicate

with other German spies in France. Or picture the mission being shown our great preparations in an aviation-field. Imagine the German agent an expert in aviation. If he examined our machines too closely he might discover our secrets. For instance, said the officer who was discussing it with me, if he should stoop down to look under the aeroplane, it would be difficult to pull him away! It was an alarming thought, whether or not aeroplanes carry their secrets beneath their wings.

There were other dangers, too, in Switzerland. The partizanship of the Swiss themselves, due to historic sympathies, and fed on the one side by the enormous and unscrupulous German propaganda, had become very active. It had grown to such a point that, in spite of the natural honesty and simplicity of the Swiss character, some of the Swiss—even officials of the highest rank, who should have been absolutely trustworthy in their neutrality, were ready to give secret help to the countries with which they sympathized.

We complained that the secret help was generally given to our enemies. It was natural enough, perhaps, because the people in the greater part of Switzerland, although they speak a dialect, read only German and were therefore particularly susceptible to German propaganda. Germany is their neighbor and intercourse between the two countries was direct and close.

Many of the German-Swiss, like the German people themselves, had been persuaded of the justice of the German cause; they believed that Germany was fighting for her existence against neighbors who were relentlessly closing in upon her. German propaganda told them that Germany was invincible and that invincible Germany was their friend. And here was one of German propaganda's great triumphs, because the Swiss are patriotic, and even those who most sympathized with Germany put the interest of their own country first. For their own country's sake they wanted to show their friendship for their great and invincible neighbor in every way that did not commit Switzerland itself to an active participation in the war.

On the other hand, western, or French-speaking, Switzerland had not been blinded by German propaganda. It saw German imperialism in its real colors. It was openly pro-Entente. It points to its own history and prides itself—Geneva in particular—upon its long record of liberalism and idealism. Now it saw that the Allies were fighting against imperialism for the true ideals of democracy and it openly proclaimed its sympathy.

But in eastern, or German-speaking, Switzerland, in spite of the inclination toward Germany, the situation was not clear-cut. The German-speaking Swiss were not by any means all dupes of German propaganda.

Switzerland as a unit is proud of her democratic form of government, and jealous of her own independence and of her recognized neutrality. She would have fought as a unit against an attempt on the part of any belligerent to invade her territory, and many of the German-Swiss realized from the beginning that it was only by a happy chance that Belgium, instead of their own country, had been invaded. I was told that the suspense in Switzerland of those early days was almost overwhelming. When the way through Belgium was chosen the relief was enormous. But the immediate popular reaction, strangely enough, was a feeling more like gratitude to Germany for sparing Switzerland than resentment at her crime against another small nation. An uneasy fear remained, however, that, as long as Germany was an autocratic military power, Switzerland's safety was not assured.

In the commercial field also Germany's carefully prepared campaign of peaceful penetration aroused doubt and fear. It was not carried out in a spirit of propitiation. The extent alone of her preparations caused alarm. What would happen to Switzerland's own chance of developing economically if she were swamped by German activities within her borders? When a German commercial house was established in Switzerland it did not give employment, I was told, to Swiss people, but brought with it its own

employees. All of its orders, too, were given to German merchants; for instance, a German firm in Switzerland would send across the frontier into Germany even for such little things as its printed letterheads, rather than order them from the Swiss stationer next door.

We heard that Germany drove hard bargains, too, with the Swiss government. The enormous prices which she extorted for all the necessities she sold to Switzerland aroused a popular resentment.

These situations naturally lessened in Switzerland the influence which was due to historic association and which had been so carefully built up by German propaganda. And it was not surprising that, side by side with the friendship and admiration of the German-Swiss for Germany, grew a fear of her military autocracy and her commercial methods, and that an increasing number of men in German Switzerland began to see clearly that Switzerland's future safety, political and commercial, depended upon the victory of the Allies, and that such a victory was worth to Switzerland a prolonged struggle with all the suffering it entailed upon her. But a large proportion of the German-Swiss, still swayed by their natural sympathies and still blinded by the enormous German propaganda, wanted the war to end promptly and with a German victory. This difference among the German-Swiss themselves probably sharpened

the partizanship of the faction which sympathized with Germany.

The differences of sympathies and interests naturally brought about conflicts in every national group in Switzerland and in many departments of the government, which resulted in difficulties and even in scandals. The situation in Switzerland's highest governing body—the Federal Council of Seven—could be taken as typical. The Councilors were supposed by the foreign representatives in Switzerland to be divided in sympathy more or less according to their language and traditions. The head of the Economic Department was a German-Swiss who was held by the Allied representatives to be a strong German partizan. The head of the Department of Justice, I was told, was born in Germany and had become a naturalized Swiss; he, too, was looked upon as actively pro-German. A third Federal Councilor, a German-Swiss, also, had the year before been sent to Berlin as the Swiss diplomatic representative, because of his known sympathy with Germany. The four other Councilors, more consistent in their stand as officials of a democratic country, were held by the Allied representatives to be strictly neutral and impartial. The representatives of the Central Powers, used to demanding favors, may have taken a different view. The departments under the pro-German Councilors were felt, from our standpoint, to be partial at times to the

Germans in their administration of affairs. Occasionally evidence of such partiality would appear. The Councilor at the head of the Economic Department, at the time that a severe print-paper restriction was put into force, wrote to the editors of a German propaganda organ in Switzerland, agreeing that they need not comply with the full requirements of the law. His letter was discovered and was published in a French-Swiss paper. No one in America can imagine the bitter struggle of every publication in Switzerland to obtain the last possible ounce of print-paper. And here was a Federal Councilor caught in the act of favoring a German propaganda paper. What an excitement there was! What stormy interviews there must have been among the Seven! How the neutral faction must have frowned upon the careless pro-German member! But they, as the Federal Council, stood together and issued an explanatory statement. I remember thinking how weak a statement it was, and wondering that the other Councilors should have stood by the culprit. This, of course, was an insignificant matter, but there were other difficulties which were international in scope. Most of them were hushed up so successfully that only the vaguest accounts reached the public. The echoes which I heard of some of these conflicts, such as the Hoffman and the Grimm incidents, were too confused to repeat.

One of the more notorious was one in which members of the Swiss General Staff had been implicated. The head of the General Staff, General Wille, was a German-Swiss of pure Prussian descent and was married to a member of a distinguished German family. It was common gossip that he and the General Staff as a whole were strongly pro-German, that they studied and admired the German military system and believed that Germany could not fail to win the war.

This story was first told to me by two young British diplomats at dinner one summer's evening on the terrace of the Bellevue-Palace Hotel. That evening the General Staff sat near us, but were screened off by a barricade of plants and palms. From behind their green screen we could hear their guttural dialect and their gruff voices clearly, and could see them distinctly. They had come on to the terrace wearing the only uniforms in that neutral meeting-place, their spurs clanking, and every one had turned to watch them. I knew that they lived in the hotel, and, although each evening after dinner they gathered about a bridge-table in the big red room, I had never before seen them in the restaurant. I had half unconsciously wondered why it was. And now, why did they sit behind a screen, I asked. It seemed so strange. I was told that they always dined in a private room and that on warm evenings the screen at the end of the ter-

race was substituted for the more substantial walls. This habit of theirs dated, it appeared, from the early days of the war, from the time of the imperialistic Russian régime, before the United States had seen its way to take up arms for democracy.

How often Switzerland, with its spies and its diplomats and its make-believes, was like a comic opera! That evening especially it seemed so to me, as we sat and gossiped on the flower-bordered terrace, and looked over the shining Aar River on to the Bernese Alps, still bright with the last touch of the Alpine glow. There was the background of the deep-blue sky which might have been stolen from a Russian ballet and fitted into the scene. A Spanish adventuress sat at the very next table to us; so pretty and gay, with her long earrings and her new flirtation. Her husband—poor young man!—had been madly in love with her, I was told, madly enough to marry her. Now he had been sent into Germany on a mission—secret, of course—which was arousing the curiosity of our Allied diplomats. And she was flirting again! Her sordid story was whispered to me between details of the Swiss affair. This latter story, too, was bad enough, as the two young Englishmen outlined it that evening—our elbows on the table, our three heads close together. It was that the confidential coded messages sent by the Russian legation in Switzerland to its government in Petrograd had been inter-

cepted and the secret code deciphered by officers of the Swiss General Staff and the information thus gained had been given to the German government. No wonder diplomatic codes in Switzerland were afterward guarded zealously! One of the young British diplomats, very correct and very literal, commented with wonder upon the length of time which the Swiss officers had given to the task of deciphering. He went back to this point over and over again without a smile. It had taken eight or nine weeks, he said, solemnly, and the Swiss officers had done nothing in all those weeks (such was their devotion to the German cause) but work studiously over the code; no interruptions of golf or tennis, I suppose! There was resentment and bitterness in his tone toward the Swiss. But surely these traitors were tried and punished? I asked. Of course they were tried, and punished, too; but here was a reason for the bitterness—the punishment, it seems, in no way fitted the crime. To us Allies the crime was of the blackest; it was deliberate betrayal by members of the supreme military authority of a friendly nation. But to the brother officers of the betrayers the attempt to help a friend, so admired and powerful and so sure to win as Germany was, had seemed, perhaps, not quite so bad. In fact it was based upon what the guilty officers believed to be patriotism. It proved not to be an isolated incident. It was part of a bargain to give infor-

mation to the German General Staff in return for which certain military advantages were assured to Switzerland. The Allied representatives saw no excuse, but rather more offense in such an arrangement, and after this incident feeling ran high in the dining-room of the Bellevue. In that meeting-place of enemy representatives responsibility for this affair and for its inadequate punishment seemed to be attached to the General Staff itself, even after the dismissal of the members who had been found guilty. As the Swiss officers went in and out to meals, the grateful German military attachés would spring from their tables and click their heels and salute. The Allied officers, I gathered, did not spring to their feet, and their salutes grew colder. The situation became so tense that it was deemed wise and tactful for the Swiss General Staff to retreat from that battle-field and lunch and dine in a private room.

This incident had an especial interest for me, because of Colonel Egli, the ranking officer of those who had been concerned and punished. Colonel Egli did not seem to suffer greatly in public esteem. He retained his military title even if he lost his distinguished post on the General Staff. In Switzerland he was an acknowledged authority on military affairs and became the military critic of one of the big German-Swiss newspapers—the *Basler Nachrichten*, where I found him a powerful antago-

nist. He was outspokenly and unashamedly pro-German. He visited the German front and proclaimed the infallibility of the German army. In the columns of the newspaper, he fought and denied each inch gained by the Allies. He fiercely and emphatically won false German victories; he cleverly and astutely combated everything that was claimed for American arms and assistance.

The *Basler Nachrichten* is an influential paper, and I remember calling it "an outrage" that Colonel Egli should hold so powerful a place upon it. I went several times to see the kindly owner and editor-in-chief of this paper. I met his daughters, was welcomed into his house, and treated in the most friendly way. He listened with patience when I objected to Colonel Egli and his methods, but warmly defended his character as a man and his ability as a critic. There is an inflexible strain of loyalty in the character of the German-Swiss, which leads them to hold to friends, right or wrong, and to be faithful to old associations; and to that quality, I believe, was due the facts that Colonel Egli flourished to the day of the armistice his German victories on the front page of the *Basler Nachrichten*, and that General Wille to the end remained supreme on the General Staff.

Poor Switzerland! Although the public and some of her government departments may have seemed to us to pass too lightly over such mat-

ters as this affair, the most acute situations and the bitterest strife must have resulted from them in the Federal Council and in the other departments of the government. The moderates must have been arrayed against the partizans. They must have been reproachful that Switzerland's own honor as a neutral was not the supreme interest with every Swiss official. But we can only guess at what happened behind the scenes, because the Swiss government never failed to present a united front to the outside world, and to come through every such crisis with apparently unshaken loyalty to each other. And, on the whole, they succeeded in maintaining a surprisingly just neutrality. I wonder what other country could have done so well with such perplexing problems both human and political.

The question of neutrality was always an acute and complicated one in Switzerland. Her own partizans were not the only ones to keep in order. The representatives of the conflicting Powers were ready to fly at one another's throats in the press and in pamphlets, and were held in check only by the severity of the Swiss neutrality laws. Suppose Switzerland had been caught napping for a moment and one Power had gained a point over the other! There was the government of the injured party ready with a protest. And Switzerland must keep on friendly terms with all the governments, because she needed help of some sort from each one of them.

To this trying situation was added a little group, without diplomatic protection and of no particular international standing, whose activities gave unceasing trouble to Switzerland throughout the war. They were the German liberals, democrats, republicans, socialists: men who had left Germany before or during the war because they hated German autocracy and wanted, through criticism and exposure, to overturn the Prussian government and to establish democratic principles in their own country. Most of them believed that Germany's regeneration was dependent upon her military defeat and were keen supporters of an Allied victory. Naturally, they were hated by the German diplomats and official representatives in Switzerland, who tried in every way to render their efforts ineffective.

Some of them established a paper—the *Freie Zeitung*, which followed the usual fashion in Switzerland of masquerading and was ostensibly a Swiss paper, conducted by Swiss editors. But, as usual, no one was deceived, least of all the German legation or the Swiss government. The chief objects of the paper were to reveal the guilt of the German government in bringing on the war and to expose its crimes in conducting it; and this it did unceasingly, bitterly, and effectively.

The German government, through the German legation in Switzerland, wanted the *Freie Zeitung* suppressed. A paragraph published in one of the Swiss papers quoted a prominent German

legation secretary as saying that its suppression would be the equivalent for Germany of a military victory. The paragraph further explained that the newspapers in Germany also attached a great importance to its disappearance. At first glance it would seem an easy thing for the powerful German legation to obtain from the Swiss government such a concession as the suppression of an unprotected paper, which, by its attacks upon a government friendly to Switzerland, constantly laid itself open to action as violating Swiss neutrality. But, although the *Freie Zeitung* had no diplomatic protection, it had friends. At that time it was well thought of in America. The "Friends of German Democracy" in the United States, a society formed mostly of the descendants of the men who had fought for democracy in Germany in 1848, subscribed to it and circulated it among the German-Americans here. It was known in other countries, too, especially in France, because the foreign papers quoted frequently from this valiant little sheet. If the Swiss government had yielded to German pressure and had suppressed it, the whole democratic world would have wondered why a republic like Switzerland should suppress a Swiss paper—it was ostensibly Swiss, you remember—because it advocated, against an autocratic class, the very principles of government upon which the Swiss Republic itself was founded. The suppression of the *Freie Zeitung* under such condi-

tions undoubtedly would have caused unfavorable comment in the press of the Allied countries, and popular opinion in those countries, ignorant of the neutrality problems of Switzerland, might have been aroused against her. She could not afford to take such a chance, even at the request of the German legation, because she was dependent upon the United States for grain and upon France for a port at which to land the grain and for transportation of the grain across its territory. Protected by this situation, the *Freie Zeitung* went far.

But Switzerland was not dependent on the Allies only. Rumor said that in the coal bargain which she had been forced to make with Germany in June, 1918, the latter country had exacted, in addition to a very high price in money, that "moral support" also should be given her. This moral support was supposed to mean the expulsion from Switzerland of some of the leaders of the German democratic movement and the suppression of the *Freie Zeitung*. The determination to suppress it was evident. If it was not practical to give its attacks upon the German government as the reason for its suppression, then some other pretext must be found. There was a great deal of talk, and even published comment, as to how this object was to be attained, and, as usual in Switzerland, the steps which were being discussed in the greatest secrecy were known to every one.

One thing after another was said to be under consideration. One means was to take advantage of the real shortage of the paper-supply and order the suppression of all papers which had been founded in Switzerland since the beginning of the war. Under this order the *Freie Zeitung* would disappear, but the Germans themselves would lose three small propaganda sheets. Such an arrangement would seem impartial to the Allied countries, and the Germans would not be seriously hurt by it, because they controlled so many long-established Swiss papers that their three small propaganda sheets would be an insignificant price to pay for getting rid of so bitter and damaging an enemy. Perhaps the Germans hesitated to pay even this price, because another pretext was found which spared them entirely. The *Freie Zeitung* was charged officially with having overconsumed its allowance of paper. The *Freie Zeitung* was daring, and the charge was probably well grounded. It was assumed that suppression would be the punishment. The German legation was about to triumph! The French papers published a story, showing that the suppression was to be effected because of political reasons and at the request of Germany, and that the ostensible reason was a mere pretext. The French-Swiss papers quoted from the French press, and an agitation blazed forth. Of course I did not want the *Freie Zeitung* suppressed and the Germans to triumph. I

called upon friends in the Swiss government for help. They saw that if this incident was given publicity in America it might make an unfortunate effect here; it might, in fact, arouse an antagonism against Switzerland out of proportion to the importance of the paper. They took up the question with other officials and I was assured that the whole matter had been exaggerated; that the *Freie Zeitung* was not to be suppressed and nothing further than a fine was contemplated, and that a continuance of the former supply of paper would be allowed.

But the question was reopened and finally the allowance of paper which had been assured to the *Freie Zeitung* was greatly cut down. Its subscribers' list consequently had to be reduced and some of its numbers omitted. It was crippled, but its enemies were not satisfied. They wanted its entire suppression; balked in one direction, another way must be found. Soon an accusation was brought that its list of subscribers was fraudulent. But this accusation, too, after interviews and agitations, failed of its end. The paper went on, but not in peace. Time passed, Germany capitulated and the armistice was signed. But the personnel of the German legation in Switzerland remained for a time the same, and their efforts were not to be tamely abandoned. Like a thunderbolt there came an order for the expulsion from Switzerland of one of the most prominent contributors to the *Freie*

Zeitung, Doctor Rosemeyer. The reason assigned was an article which he had written the previous June, attacking the Prussian government and its rulers—especially the Kaiser, the Crown Prince, Ludendorff, and Hindenburg. Even the German people, he held, were guilty for their support of the war. The article had been written for a French paper and published in France and was never meant to appear in Switzerland. One of the German propaganda organs in Switzerland got hold of it, reprinted it, and agitated about it. Doctor Rosemeyer was charged with the crime of violating Swiss neutrality, by having taken advantage of his residence on Swiss soil to conduct a campaign in one belligerent country, France, against another, Germany. This one article was held to constitute a campaign. The article was undoubtedly virulent. But if it had been published in America at that time it would have seemed to us plain truth-telling and its author a man of impartial insight. Was a country friendly to us to expel him and make him a martyr after the war was over? It seemed to me inexpedient as well as unjust. The government he attacked was no longer in existence; its rulers had fled, its defeated people themselves had turned against the rulers he had condemned. In the general break-up, his article, now months old, could add no further injury to any one. His expulsion by Switzerland would have seemed partial to the old Prussian régime. I protested

against it to a high Swiss official, and I urged that it was an inappropriate moment to run the risk of stirring up prejudice against Switzerland in the United States and in the other victorious countries for a matter that had lost its bearing on the present situation. I argued that from slighter reasons than this a "*cause célèbre*" might spring. The Swiss official maintained that the proposed expulsion was just, and he advanced another reason for it. He said, "The German government and its rulers have been our friends, and, now that they are defeated and attacked on all sides, we should stand by them more loyally than ever." The idea of loyalty strongly appeals to the German-Swiss. It has become a tradition with them. The official, when he said this, seemed to be a little absurd—but very lovable! At least here was idealism—questionable as to its soundness, as it was—struggling against expediency in a government. But finally, in spite of Swiss loyalty, the order expelling Doctor Rosemeyer was withdrawn, and the troubles of the *Freie Zeitung*, as far as I know, came more or less to an end.

CHAPTER X

THE APPROACHING END

I HAD supposed that, with the armistice and the collapse of the Prussian autocratic government, the German exiles would return at once to their country. But as long as the former minister continued in charge of the German legation in Berne, it was not an easy thing for them to do. Naturally, they were not in favor with the old authorities, and many of them from the beginning were opposed to the new government in spite of all the changes. They saw it pass into the hands of men whose loyalty to the democratic cause they suspected, or of men too far on the radical side. When they asked for their passports, many reasons could be alleged for refusing them; for instance, some of them had evaded military service on leaving Germany. Those who were socialists did return, assisted by their party leaders in Berlin. Those who called themselves republicans or democrats remained in Switzerland because, when they could not obtain their passports from the legation, they had no powerful party leaders at home to whom

they could appeal. There they remained, still protesting against the government in Germany, still men without a country.

Of course, they did not escape gossip, official or semi-official; nobody in Switzerland did! Much of it may have come originally from members of the German official circles, prompted by their keen desire to discredit these men. It may have drifted through neutral officials to our own diplomats. But in the form in which it was repeated by our diplomats it was not kind, and it showed an incomplete understanding of the impulses and reasons that prompt human action. Perhaps it could not be otherwise with men whose lives have always fallen in soft and easy social places. What did they in their protected and distinguished careers know of the trials of men who have determined upon exile; or of the courage that is required to face disgrace and poverty and the contempt of relations and friends who are to be left behind; or of all the strife and bitterness that may have preceded a decision to turn against one's country in a time of war? The diplomats did not hesitate to say of the exiles who were of military age that they had left Germany because they were cowards and afraid to fight, of others that they were "disappointed," having failed in some ambition. There was a petty, ready-made reason for each man's exile. One, it was said, had left in anger and spite because he had applied to Krupp's factory

for an important position and had been refused. Three others, forced into exile because of their writings, had made a dramatic and dangerous escape from Germany; they had done so, it was explained, because they had failed to be given commissions in the German army. Another left because he wanted a Cabinet position which was given to a rival. I remember saying to one of our diplomats, in reference to the man who was supposed to have applied to Krupp's, that I did not believe the story. The diplomat objected in wonder. "Why else should he have left?" he asked. "There seems to be no other reason; there is nothing else against him." The kindest thing said of these exiles was that they were unbalanced and erratic. By conventional standards, undoubtedly it was true. The perfectly balanced German would have stayed at home, fought, acted, and thought as the great majority of Germans did. These exiles were, I believe, idealists who had made a heroic choice of leaving their own country and its accustomed ways, and of deciding in the heat of war between two ideals—the one of patriotism and the other of democracy. Their choice did not mean wounds, mutilation, or death. They won no laurels on the battle-fields, and they wore no medals, but I believe they were heroes all the same. Their heroism was the more difficult because it received no general recognition. There was nothing about them—wounds or medals—to indicate virtue of

any kind, which would bring them the respect and admiration of the strangers among whom they were going. They were merely subject to unkind gossip and misunderstanding. Undoubtedly, too, what heroism they did possess was not a steady and consistent thing. They probably rebelled at times against the consequences of their great decision. How full of human frailties they were! Some of them were vain and wanted praise. They were irritable enough to quarrel over trifles with one another. They were petty enough to suspect one another unworthily. One may have been unduly interested in making his pamphlets against Germany pay, another may have thought too much of his health and have sat wrapped in shawls, shivering by an electric heater, rather than face the difficulties and dangers of going back without a passport to a disturbed country. Another may have hoped to gain a supremacy that would bring him a great political reward after the triumph of democracy in Germany. In fact, they all probably were swayed by a mixture of motives—some heroic and some material. There was not one great leader among them. Not one of them big or simple enough to bring the others together and with them lead their country through its hour of crisis to the democracy of which they all dreamed and for which they all had sacrificed. It would have needed a superman, perhaps, because there never was so incongruous a

group. Only in exile could they have been drawn together even momentarily. There were business men, poets, Jews, Gentiles, young and old, representing the widest range of traditions, of class, and of character. I would wonder that one was so gentle and incompetent, a typical idealist, a little shabby and underfed, another so alert and grasping, bitterly fearful of further poverty. Except for their ideals of democracy, the one thing they had in common was education. They nearly all had a university title of Doctor or Professor.

Some of them I never saw; some I knew well. There were several whom I saw occasionally, when they brought their pamphlets to me or when I wanted their help in translations. These I knew chiefly through their writing and was grateful to them because of their bitterness against the German military caste.

One of those I never saw was a former member of the Reichstag, now an old man, a Jew who had been a lawyer and a great orator. He had written the pamphlet called *J'accuse*, which was so bitter an arraignment of the German government that he had not only to live in exile, but even in neutral Switzerland he was forced to remain in disguise to escape expulsion. His true name was never mentioned, and he was always referred to in whispers merely as "the author of *J'accuse*." He had been rich, we heard, but his fortune had been confiscated, and now in his old

age he was constantly worried about the future. How could he provide for his daughters? If he could go to America he felt that here he would be able to put his gift of oratory to use for the cause of democracy and find a way to earn his living. But permission for him to come here could not be obtained.

Another one of those I never saw was Doctor Rosemeyer, the man over whose ordered expulsion from Switzerland I had been so agitated. I did not seek his acquaintance, because I was always very busy, and, although every one agreed that he was a powerful writer and a very learned man, it seemed that from his vast fund of learning there came a stream of talk, instructive and interesting, but interminable.

Professor Nippold I saw only once. He came to call upon me one day after his approaching visit had been announced ceremoniously through the legation. He arrived in the midst of the busiest part of my day. The long table in the middle of my office where I sat was littered with clippings, with translations, and with articles—with every sort of thing awaiting my attention. I did not want to take time to talk, but I could not send him away, for he had come from Thun on a slow Swiss train especially to see me. In he came, a little gentleman of the old school, unmistakably a professor, very correct, in a frock-coat, holding his hat and his gloves in his hand. My office was scantily furnished. There

was one small chair, which, like my table, was littered with papers. He couldn't sit there. There was a big armchair meant for distinguished visitors such as he, but Sonny was sitting in it. I turned him out hastily. I was abashed to find it covered with white hairs. I hoped Professor Nippold wouldn't notice them—he looked so neat. I brushed it hurriedly with a flip or two of my hand, and invited him to take it. He carefully drew apart the tails of his immaculate, old-fashioned frock-coat and sat on the very edge, erect and uneasy, but with an air of leisureliness and of ceremony, while Sonny sat at my feet and looked at him disapprovingly. We discussed a proposed international library in Zurich, which had caused much strife and many heartburnings among the circle of Swiss professors. We hoped support for it might be obtained from the Carnegie Peace Endowment. Other matters of a like sort we talked over, and then he left. I did not know, or I've forgotten, his story. I think he had lived in Switzerland before the war began. The reason I remember him so distinctly is that, while he talked, I pictured him with his ceremonious old-fashioned courtesy, correct and unbending, beside the other German exiles, and especially beside one about whom I had been told the very evening before—a poet, with black hair brushed away from his face, with wild black eyes and all the fire of an untamed nature in his manner!

There was Henry Ball, high-shouldered, with his dark hair cut in a bang, his sleeves always too short, who looked to me like a little German boy grown up from out of my Grimm's *Fairy Tales*. He should have worn a wide, turn-down collar. He was supposed to be the business man of the group. He had been, it seems, a theatrical manager. When he left Germany he, assisted by a young woman who had been a ballet dancer, opened a cabaret in Zurich which soon became known as a meeting-place of German Democrats and was closed by the Zurich police.

Dr. Hans Schlieben, the real editor of the *Freie Zeitung*, of whom I saw most, and to whom I went with many inquiries and many perplexities, had been for years in the German Consular Service and the Foreign Office. His point of view was clear and definite; his attitude against the German government was partizan in the extreme, and at times he lost patience with the other exiles who were not prepared to go to excessive lengths. He was very adroit in guiding the *Freie Zeitung* through all its perils. He had a sly sense of humor that, in the midst of the greatest difficulties and the bitterest discouragements, made him smile over the peculiarities of his compatriots, and over his own as well. He would put into the most solemn and ponderous of sentences a quaint word or phrase that would give me a shock of surprise and force a sudden smile from me, even when I was most serious and

hurried. It was to him that fell the labor of trying to bring together the German exiles for some common plan in support of their common ideals. He worked at it unceasingly and unsuccessfully. He was my earliest friend among this group.

On my first arrival in Switzerland I bought a *Freie Zeitung* at a news-stand. Its name was familiar to me because I had been told of it in America. I went to call on its editors because it seemed to me I would find men here who believed as we did. My action shocked the diplomats. Any connection with the German democrats, I was told, must be carried on in secret. So important was this secrecy that Doctor Schlieben must be known and always spoken of by an assumed name. Especial precautions should be taken over the telephone. Was it, I wondered, because these men technically were considered enemies, and an American would compromise himself by knowing them? What nonsense it seemed to me.

But another reason was given for caution. I was warned that there would be grave danger to the German democrats themselves if they were known to be acquainted with me. Their whole cause would be discredited, it seemed. It would lead all the world to suspect that the *Freie Zeitung* was being subsidized. And the German democrats were fiercely independent and rightfully proud of the independence of their paper.

I thought Doctor Schlieben himself would be the best judge of the situation, so I talked it over with him. He was sure it would be an advantage rather than a danger to have it known that there were Americans who took an interest in the *Freie Zeitung*. In the end this proved to be true, as you have seen. But how the storm raged in these early days of my struggle with the diplomats! One day I walked with Doctor Schlieben openly on the streets of Berne. I took tea with him and his wife in a little café. The diplomats heard of it. I was told that it seemed to them incontrovertible proof of my lack of discretion and of the danger that would result from my remaining in Switzerland.

Of all the German democrats, the most picturesque was Doctor Muehlon, a former director of the great Krupp munition-factory and a very wealthy member of Germany's autocratic circle. He is tall and blond, distinguished-looking and still young, with a manner that arouses and holds one's interest. Some of the other German exiles complained that he was unstable. Perhaps it is inevitable that a man who could be so warmed by enthusiasm and so chilled by despair as he should seem unstable to men of colder and more practical natures. The most surprising thing to me about Doctor Muehlon was that he should ever have been a director of the Krupp factory, because such an office would call for all the business-like qualities which it was com-

plained that he lacked. No one could deny that he had courage and idealism. When he had become convinced of Germany's guilt in the war he withdrew from the Krupp organization and from participation in the government. He broke away from all his old associations. And what power they can have over such a man! He suffered. He despaired over it. He wrote and published a pamphlet revealing what he knew and denouncing his country before the world. It was a tragic step for him and it meant, of course, his exile. When I knew him he was living in the deepest seclusion with his wife and little blond children, a few miles from Berne in a delightful old Swiss country house with shady terraces and a courtyard inclosed by frescoed walls. There he saw a few visitors from time to time, but so great was his shame at his country's guilt that he said until she had recognized and expiated it he could not face the world and he would never leave his refuge; he would live on his own land as a hermit. There, when I went to see him, he talked of all the problems of the war, of social developments in the past and of the hopes of the future. Later, when the armistice had been signed and Germany had begun to expiate her crimes, he went back to his country. He found in the stormy period of readjustment much that he could not support, but he saw, too, suffering and privation on all sides. He was touched to the heart by the plight of the little

children there, ninety per cent. of whom he found were affected in some way by famine conditions, with an appalling death-rate among those in the crowded public institutions. He brought to me a very touching appeal he had written on their behalf to the children of America to come to their relief. Couldn't such a campaign, he wondered, be instituted here in America? No one could want little children, even little German children, to suffer. They, at least, were not guilty of the war, and they were bearing the brunt of the punishment there. Such an appeal, if listened to now, he thought, would serve a double purpose and do away in the next generation with the bitterness which war engenders. Perhaps it would have, but our countries were still at war. Hatred was active here and suspicion was on the alert. There might be seen in the appeal, written from so tender and disinterested a motive, a propaganda effort of some kind. I passed it on to a representative of the Food Administration and I do not know what became of it.

I wondered if there was ever a more interesting man than Doctor Muehlon, or one whose romantic situation fitted so well his attractive and vivid personality. You could understand that he in his fastidious exile held somewhat aloof from the other German democrats. How could they all have worked together without a leader—these individualists, who had rebelled singly against their country's outrages?

During all the war the German exiles kept up their connections with the people of their own political belief in Germany, who had not had the courage to declare their position openly, and, therefore, were able to remain at home. These latter came now and then to Switzerland and held secret interviews with their more courageous friends who had gone into exile. In this way we heard a great many rumors about conditions in Germany, although the Germans themselves in Germany were kept in ignorance of much that was taking place about them by the severity of the censorship. They before long realized this, of course, and were so greedy for news that uncensored pamphlets and papers which reached them secretly in spite of the censorship went, it was said, from hand to hand and were read into shreds. It was estimated that each piece of contraband literature was read by an average of one hundred persons.

Throughout the summer of 1918 there was an orgy of rumor in Switzerland about Austria and Germany. Every one agreed that Austria was in a serious condition. It was early reported that there was complete demoralization there; trains did not run on schedule, mails were not delivered, and men died at their posts of starvation. But in each little set of people there was gossip of a different character about Germany, and the conflicting conclusions which were drawn and the varying predictions which were

made were colored, undoubtedly, by the sympathies and political beliefs or general interests of those who retailed them. But, even so, the conclusions and predictions soon ceased to point to a German victory. The question now came to be merely how long Germany could hold out.

My friends in Zurich said that when relatives of theirs came from Germany to visit Switzerland, thin and pale, to recuperate and grow fat even on the slim Swiss diet, they were obliged, on crossing the German frontier, to sign a paper swearing that they would tell nothing unfavorable about conditions in Germany. At first, when they came, they remembered their pledge and would say nothing, but by degrees—for instance, during conversations at the dinner-table—all sorts of little things would slip out involuntarily. There was gossip, and undoubtedly exaggeration, about the enormous cost and the scarcity of everything. People of distinguished social position everywhere in Germany, they said, went barefooted during the summer of 1918 in order to set a fashion of economy in shoes. This they did with apparent cheerfulness under a pretext of seeking beauty and health. But food, they said, was more plentiful than it had been the year before. Perhaps the German government had been forced to relax its restrictions because of its great promises of Ukrainian grain.

Stories of the lawless conditions in Berlin fore-

shadowed the era of wild dissipation in Germany that followed the armistice. It was apparent that the old German domestic life with its meek and obedient *hausfrauen* was a thing of the past. The women, some of whom had fallen into habits of immorality, difficult to believe, were reluctant, or even afraid, to have their husbands—made uncivilized by warfare and trench life—come home on leave. Thefts and violence on the streets, as we all had heard, were only too common. When complaints were made at police headquarters the complainers were rebuffed for making trouble about such trifles in time of war! Gossip from these sources ceased later in the summer, because, probably, it was found that the exacted pledges of silence did little good, and traveling from Germany to Switzerland, which formerly had been easy, was almost entirely cut off.

From a group of Swiss and cosmopolitan journalists information of another sort came. Early in July they had received assurances that in October a well-defined peace offensive would be made in behalf of the Central Powers, through Austria. This bit of gossip proved to be more accurate than the rumor that in July or early August the Germans would begin a great and finally overwhelming offensive. Perhaps they had planned to! It was said, also, that in Germany at this time the military power had become supreme; that every important state paper and

communication went first to Ludendorff before it reached the civil officials. This the journalists took to indicate the collapse of the civil government. From Swiss business men in the German-Swiss cities we heard in August that, although there seemed no chance of a civilian uprising or revolution in Germany—always a fond hope of the German exiles—the morale and discipline of the German army was breaking down. Some of these Swiss business men, who were German in sympathy, feared, now that it had started, it would go very fast.

About this time one of the German democrats had information that trouble was brewing in the German navy and an outbreak beginning there might be expected. We probably did not then realize the significance of this report. But later, after the signing of the armistice, when it was common gossip that the political revolution had begun in the German navy at Kiel, and that the movement there was of so determined a nature that groups of sailors were sent about the country to stir the civilians to action, I often thought of this early report and wondered how it had so promptly reached the German exiles in Switzerland.

In September, when the Allies were advancing, I heard from an editor of a German-Swiss paper that the severity of the German censorship and the methods of its military propaganda had defeated their own purpose and that the German



THE ANCIENT ZEITGLOCKENTURM, BERNE, SWITZERLAND



people had begun to discount all military and political information and disbelieve everything they were told. To such an extent was this true that in many of the more remote parts of the empire it was firmly believed that the Allies were already on German ground.

The general trend of this gossip, unreliable as most of it was, seemed to show undoubtedly that conditions in Germany were bad. This knowledge, taken in connection with the collapse of Bulgaria, the peace advances of Austria in September, and the steady military victories of the Allies on the western front, led me to feel that the end of the war was near. I lost interest in the military news; I found I could not even read it, and I seemed to myself to be holding my breath, waiting for the way in which the final peace step would come. I began to feel that the work I had gone to Switzerland to do was over, and my thoughts turned insistently toward home. Yet, when the request for the armistice finally did come from the Central Powers on October 5th, its effect upon me was as of a sudden and unexpected miracle. It seemed a thing too great and surprising to comprehend.

I heard of it as I was motoring from Berne to Geneva. When I passed through Lausanne I saw a crowd of people standing silently before the bulletin-board of the *Gazette de Lausanne*. What was it, I wondered, they were standing there so silently and intently looking at? Was there an-

other military victory for the Allies? I stopped the motor and went to see. And there was posted the news—the great and surprising news we had been waiting for and expecting so long. No wonder the crowd was silent, as if stunned. It meant so much. The end at last of the long years of slaughter! For me, my first selfish thought was that it meant home, because never from that moment did I have a doubt that the end of the war had come.

I believe that if the war had gone on for ten years I should have had the courage to stay unflinchingly at my post. And I did not underestimate the courage it would have taken. I could measure it by the way my spirits flagged at times. But I had found a formula, which served unfailingly to revive them. It was simply to call my post the "Berne Trench," and remind myself of what others in other trenches were called upon to endure. My part seemed easy enough in comparison. I remember one day walking along the busy, crowded Bahnhofstrasse of Zurich with the Italian journalist, on the way to see a new Italian book-shop. We talked, he in his Italian French, I in my American French, of the hardships of the war. He had been in active service for three years in Italy, he told me, and, of all the suffering he had endured, it was the mud of the trenches that he had hated most. He hated it when it was wet and soft; he hated it when it had grown stiff on his clothes and on

his skin. He had a beard—I wondered why he did not shave it—and he said the mud got into it. He could feel, could even taste, the mud still. The horror of it possessed him like a nightmare. But sometimes he felt that the loneliness and strife and difficulties in Switzerland were worse, even, than the danger and the mud of the Italian trenches, and he wished he was back again, for at least there one had a feeling of companionship and an inspiration which were totally lacking here.

He asked me how it was that, once away from Berne, I had had the courage to return. I said that when men were ordered back to the trenches they went, and that Berne had seemed merely the particular trench to which I had been assigned, and that at least it was free from the mud and other hardships of the real trenches.

I had written to Mr. Creel that he could depend upon my staying on in Switzerland to the very end of the war, no matter how long it lasted. But, now that the end was at hand, everything was changed. From now on I began to feel the cold of the unheated hotel. I rebelled against the inconvenience of going without hot water for baths except on Saturdays. I looked with distaste at the unappetizing, scanty food. I became restless over the confinement of my work that gave me no time for exercise, and especially I felt the want of human relations. When for weeks and weeks no

letters came from home, or from friends in France, through those relentless war barriers of the censorship in France and Switzerland, I grew homesick all over again. In fact, everything which previously I had accepted almost without a rebellious thought began now to weigh upon my spirits. I wanted to go home. I began writing and cabling to Washington, suggesting modifications of the work and begging for my release. I felt the main purpose of the work, as far as my part went, would be accomplished when the armistice was signed. And I had no doubt that the armistice would be signed soon. But among the Americans and Allies in Switzerland I was almost alone in thinking so. Of course, our work had to be carried on as vigorously as ever to the very end, and this necessity may have had something to do with the feeling of the Americans there that the war itself would last for at least another year. How they insisted upon it! When, in early October, I boldly made a bet that hostilities would be over by December 15th, I was laughed at. I was being deceived, I was told, by what was merely the well-defined German peace-offensive that had been so long talked of and expected by everybody. It was in reality, the wiseacres said, nothing but another propaganda effort on the part of the enemy to bring discord among the Allies.

I was demoralized to such an extent by the approaching end that I found refuge only in

increased work. Our office was busier than ever. Official messages, or "notes," came frequently. Even when they did not come we were on the alert to receive them. All the other activities of our office I pushed with all my energy. Work was hurried on pamphlets, on films—on everything. The distribution, too, of the pamphlets was extended. I felt I could take no time to eat or to sleep, because it was of the greatest importance that at this moment, when the enemy might be hesitating over the acceptance of hard terms, he should be made to realize to the fullest extent the power of our resources and the character of our warlike determination. There seemed so short a time left for our efforts to be effective!

CHAPTER XI

GRIEF AND ADVENTURE

AT this time another epidemic of the Spanish grippe broke out in Switzerland, and especially in Berne, and brought a personal grief to me. The hospitals were crowded and were turning away patients. Nurses could not be found. It was a hard time for every one. Our own office force was crippled by it. One of our employees who had fallen ill was a young man from Luxemburg. He had worked in Mr. Fife's department, and I could not recall ever having seen him. At first we heard that he hoped to be well enough in a day or two to return to his work. One Monday morning no message came, and I sent to inquire. He was found delirious, alone in a rented room. His landlady, too, was ill. He had no friends or relations in Switzerland. He was absolutely alone. We tried in vain to get him into a hospital. We tried in vain to find a nurse for him or to have him moved where he could be taken care of. The Swiss doctor I sent to look after him was overworked himself and could not help very much. What was to be done? It

would be like murder to leave the boy alone to die. I consulted the office force, but no one showed any inclination to volunteer as a nurse. I myself felt torn between the responsibility of continuing my work at the office and the responsibility of taking care of this boy I had never seen. In this dilemma I thought of my little maid, Hedwig. I knew at once that she would help. She had come to me the previous February when I had first arrived in Switzerland. She had been properly recommended; but every one, the diplomats especially, had suspected her of being a German spy. Even Professor Rappard had been uneasy about her. He said that Hedwig is a German name, almost unknown in Switzerland, and we knew that she had formerly served a German princess. But I was confident that she was not a spy. When he and the diplomats asked me how I knew she was not, they thought I gave no answer at all when I said I could tell by looking at her that she was honest through and through.

She was conscientious, too, and happy-hearted and gay, and capable of big things, as her death showed. There never was a person so open to appeal. When I had determined at the end of March to leave Berne and come back to America I asked Hedwig if she would come with me. "Oh," she said, "I should like to do it, but it's too dangerous with the German submarines. I'd be afraid." I was discouraged at that time by

my experiences with the diplomats and tried by my failures. Had every one in the world grown cautious and ignoble? I wondered. I ought not to be surprised that a little lady's maid, too, should be cautious; after all, it was natural enough. I gave little attention to what I answered. Perhaps it was something to the effect that it did not seem to me the time for us to treasure our own lives so carefully, with the great tragedies that were taking place daily on the battle-fields. I have wondered what there could have been in anything I said that touched Hedwig's heart and fired her imagination. I stared at her in surprise when she answered, quickly, "Madame is right, and I'll go across the ocean with her back and forth whenever she goes." But in two days I was off without Hedwig, because her passport could not be arranged so quickly.

When I came back to Berne in June Hedwig joined me again. How she bullied me! She would brush my hair and tie it up in blue ribbons each night, as I leaned over my papers, no matter how busy and preoccupied I was. She loved pretty things for herself and for me, and would plan to have me dressed up in the clothes she liked best, at least on Sundays. She disapproved of my way of living. She thought that my hasty luncheon at the office was absurd, when every one else took two hours in the middle of the day to eat and rest. She would bring my sandwich to me and put it out on my long, crowded table

as temptingly as she could, and try to woo my attention from clippings and articles. Sometimes she would bring flowers, too, especially on market-days when they were sold on the streets. She would stay on, standing there at my table until I started to eat. She would jeer a little at me, saying such things as, "Madame thinks she's made of different stuff from other people, and doesn't need to eat and sleep." She would say I was too thin, and that unless I ate and slept more I would never be considered a beauty in "Canton Berne," because there in "Canton Berne" fat ladies only were admired. At the couriers' table she had heard them all talk of a very great beauty. The lady, when she saw her, was a mere mountain of flesh. Yes, madame should eat and rest more! She would try to tempt me from my work, and sometimes she would telephone me from the hotel in the late afternoons to say that the Alpine glow was going to be beautiful, and that if madame would only hurry home she could see it from her little balcony. The big armchair was already put out there, waiting for madame.

Hedwig herself was young and plump and pretty. She often slept late in the mornings and was always annoyed with herself when she found me up and dressed and ready to go to my office before she or any one else in the hotel had shivered out of bed. To make up for it, she would stay up later and later at night, and thus

make her next morning's rising all the more difficult. She loved Sonny and taught him to shake hands, which he did in a solemn, listless way. She was going to teach him to sit up, and other tricks, so he would astonish my friends when we all went to America together!

She was amused because he would never play with the aristocratic little dogs in the hotel. He would pass them without a glance, or draw up his lip scornfully over his long eye-tooth. But on market-days he would desert me on the way to the office and spend the day playing and fighting with the most plebeian dogs in Berne. They would all gather in the market-place—dogs that had drawn wagons from farms, dogs that lived in city alleys, dogs covered with fleas and with sores. When their play degenerated into fights it would be ended, perhaps, by the kicks of a market-woman. He would come home at evening, tired and dirty. Hedwig would welcome him reproachfully, brush him carefully, and wipe him off with towels. He could not be washed; there would be no warm water until Saturday. Hedwig at first objected to Sonny's market-day sprees. Other people did, too. There was rarely a market-day that the *concierge* of the hotel or some acquaintance didn't telephone me to say that he had seen Sonny in the market-place and had tried, but couldn't catch him. My informant would add that he knew I wouldn't want Sonny running about with all the street dogs in Berne. It was

assumed that I would send for him and punish him and keep him in proper surroundings. But I did not feel that way. I was glad for Sonny to have a little freedom. I would smile to myself at his democratic tastes. I told Hedwig of how, in my own sheltered childhood, I used to look from the windows of a great high house, and how my heart would almost burst to be free and to play with the little boys in the street. Hedwig understood. After that, on market-days when she brought my luncheon to the office, she would look at the empty big chair and say, with a smile, "Sonny not here?" or she would tell me that she had caught a glimpse of him as she had passed through the market-place, and that to-day he was dirtier and happier than ever. He had pretended not to see her. Yes, Hedwig understood all about it.

It was to Hedwig I turned in my dilemma about the Luxemburg boy. I hurried from my office to the hotel in the middle of the day and told her about him. I did not even have time to ask her to take care of him. At once she begged that she might be allowed to do so. She said that she, too, longed to be of service. I reminded her of the mortality among those who nursed. She did not care. She would be so very proud to help, she said. She went to his boarding-house and nursed him through a desperate illness and saved his life. When we thought he was going to die we sent for his mother. She

came and stayed to nurse him back to health and strength. But before she came Hedwig herself had caught the grippe. At first she wouldn't leave her patient and go to bed, as she should have. No, no; she ridiculed the idea of being really ill. She had never been in bed one day in her life and she couldn't desert her patient. We had then found a man nurse, but Hedwig felt that he would not understand the case as she did. And madame herself, she said, had been so neglected; madame's clothes must be looked after, too, now that the young man was better. But a day soon came when, with all her determination, she could not get up from her bed. The American Red Cross doctor lent me his nurse to take care of her. He himself consulted with the Swiss doctors and did everything to help. But she grew very ill at the time when I was busiest. One Thursday night I had to leave Berne on an important matter. I went to say good-by to her. I told her I would be back on the following Saturday morning, away two nights and a day only. How I hoped I would find her better. "Not back until Saturday, madame?" Hedwig said, in a hushed tone, as if it meant all eternity. When I came back she was worse. There were nights when we had to hold her in bed in her delirium. In a lucid moment she told me she did not want to die. She was afraid to die, she said; but all the same she was glad she had nursed the young man, no matter what hap-

pened. Just before she died, after a long period of unconsciousness, she opened her eyes and recognized us all. She asked for Sonny. I hurried to find him, and put him on the bed beside her. He was so glad to see her again and he licked her poor hand, moving in stiff, blind jerks to pat him. She talked haltingly for a moment of how she had always tried to do her best, and then she said, "Madame, I'll never, never go to America with you." And soon little Hedwig, who had been so gallant and so gay, breathed her last, and I was left with a heavy heart.

It was while she was ill that the burden of our work was heaviest and our difficulties were greatest. The epidemic hampered all efforts. Industrial troubles which had been threatening in Switzerland for a long time were coming to a head. It was no wonder that they did, because Switzerland, although a neutral country, had felt all along the pinch of war keenly. Her food was insufficient. Milk, sugar, bread, cheese, and grease were rationed so carefully that the quantities allowed, I was told, were really insufficient for the classes who could not afford luxuries. Meat was dear, although the cows which had made Switzerland a cheese-producing country and which could not now be fed adequately were being sold and slaughtered for food. Her people were not only hungry; they were cold. Shoes and woolen clothes were prohibitive in

price; coal was so dear and scarce that the houses could not be kept warm. The lack of coal, too, was halting her industries, except those which were manufacturing war-supplies. Her vast hotels, built for an army of tourists, were empty except in Zurich and Berne. The hours of labor in Switzerland were long and the wages were inadequate to meet the rising prices. Sections of her citizen army were constantly mobilized, which was an additional hardship. The international political conflicts of which she was the scene were threatening her own solidarity by increasing the bitterness between the pro-Entente and pro-German elements of her population and of her governing bodies, and, worst of all, she was the scene of one devastating epidemic after another. When the international Socialists or the Bolsheviks wished to extend their agitation into Switzerland, they undoubtedly found local conditions which could easily be used as a starting-point. The troubles began in Zurich and were constant.

The situation in that district was particularly difficult, because of the great number of foreign agitators who had congregated there after the beginning of the war. Germany, it was said, had exiled or sent into Switzerland her own agitators and Bolsheviks, thus at one stroke seeking to rid herself of a danger and to extend it through a neutral country to the Allies. Once on Swiss ground, these men were active. There

were strikes, parades, and other demonstrations. A day in early November, 1918, was fixed for a national demonstration, a one-day strike, which was to paralyze all industries, street-cars, mails, and trains. Certain local reforms were demanded—higher wages, a shorter workday, and an early re-election of Parliament by the recently adopted method of proportional representation. This method had been voted a few weeks before by an overwhelming majority at a national referendum. The Parliament, which was then sitting, had several years still to serve out its term before, in the natural course, another one would be elected. But the Socialists were impatient for the new method. Such were the ostensible reasons for the proposed great national demonstration. But there were rumors that the effort was financed by the Russian Bolsheviks and looked toward establishing, finally, a soviet form of government. The Swiss officials believed it was a pure Bolshevik uprising and prepared to meet it adequately. The government mobilized its citizen army with sudden effectiveness. The French cantons and the agricultural districts were called upon to furnish the troops to allay the disorder, because French Switzerland was more free than German Switzerland from industrial discontent, and because the peasants throughout the country, owners of their own farms, were strongly organized and widely separated in interests from the industrial

classes of the cities, and were already somewhat antagonistic to them.

There had been a great deal of talk of the threatening trouble, but I was too absorbed in the details of my office work to pay much attention to it, until I found that our own work was hampered by the absence of one-half of the men we employed. Some of them were ill with the grippe, and the others had been suddenly mobilized.

It was during these trying and threatening conditions that a message came to our office from President Wilson which stirred us to a day of feverish activity. It was that I should get the widest possible publicity for an appeal he was sending to the "constituent nations of Austria-Hungary that had achieved liberation from the yoke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire." The appeal was that these nations should keep order, and it read: "May I not say, as speaking for multitudes of your most sincere friends, that it is the earnest hope and expectation of all friends of freedom everywhere, and particularly of those whose present and immediate task it is to assist the liberated peoples of the world to establish themselves in genuine freedom, that both the leaders and the peoples of the countries recently set free shall see to it that the momentous changes now being brought about are carried through with order, with moderation, with mercy as well as firmness, and that violence and

cruelty of every kind are checked and prevented so that nothing inhumane may stain the annals of the new age of achievement."

I had two problems with the message; one was to have it translated and printed, and the other to obtain publicity for it. President Wilson's instructions were definite, and went even so far as to say that I was to have the "necessary translations prepared"! The message was delivered about ten o'clock in the morning of November 7th. The epidemic was raging. Our office force was crippled. There was a strike in the printing trades—a forerunner of the larger Bolshevik demonstration. There could not have been a worse time for a piece of emergency work. The one sentence forming the appeal presented almost insuperable difficulties to the minds of foreign translators. But so did all of President Wilson's utterances. And the printing! One firm undertook to do it that day within a specified time, and after a two-hour interval, when I went back suspiciously to see what progress was being made, they acknowledged they could not do it. I took it to another firm. They had no workmen at all; they said the strikers would not allow them to run their presses. But members of the owner's family finally promised to help out and print our message immediately in four languages — German, Hungarian, Italian, and French.

The problem as to the publicity was how to

send the appeal from Switzerland to the countries which were formerly the Austro-Hungarian Empire, because communication between Switzerland and the countries to the east seemed to have halted completely. Even after the appeal was sent across the frontier there might be difficulty in distributing it, because it was reported that the telegraph-wires there were down and that there was no mail service. But we knew merely the barest facts—that three days before then the Allies had signed the armistice with Austria - Hungary, and that the Allied armies were now in control. Already the old Austro-Hungarian government was a thing of the past. Hungary had broken away from Austria and had a democratic council of her own and there seemed to be the bitterest feeling between the two. It could be guessed that the new local council in Vienna, under Doctor Seitz's direction, was having to face enormous difficulties. No late news had come from the new countries of the Czecho-Slovaks and Jugo-Slavs. In fact, we knew very little of what was happening across the frontier.

There were, of course, some simple means to try for publicity, and I neglected none of them. We sent the message to all the French- German- and Italian-Swiss papers and to the missions in Switzerland which were maintained by the countries formerly under the Austro-Hungarian yoke. In spite of reports that it was useless, I tried

sending the message by telegraph to the new governing councils, the Nationalrats and Staatsrats, which had been set up in these new countries, and to all of the chief newspapers.

There was the Wiener Korrespondenz, the formerly official Austrian news agency. I had already been to see its managers and had discussed with them the feasibility of the agency using American news items which we thought might be of interest to their papers. Through them I had heard that present communications with Austria were uncertain. Now that I wanted publicity for the President's message I called on them again.

They told me that there had been no communications from Austria since the signing of the armistice; that they believed there was no means whatever of direct communication, but that they would try in a few days to send a courier through Munich and in that way seek to reach Vienna. They at once took five thousand copies of the message for distribution, and for weeks after we supplied them steadily with a large number in various languages.

The news agencies, such as the Wiener Korrespondenz and later the German agency, Wolff, were in a curious position. They were official agencies, or, rather, semi-official—*officieux*, in distinction to *officiel*, a difference upon which the diplomats insisted, as if therein resided the difference between life and death. Well, these semi-

official *officieux* agencies were instruments of their governments. In the crisis, when it was uncertain from day to day what kind of government would be established at home, these news agencies were far from happy. The men in charge of the Wiener Korrespondenz were Jews, whose personal sympathies seemed to incline toward the most liberal and democratic side. I do not doubt that they considered their own country, Austria, with its new government under Doctor Seitz, as included among the nations which had liberated themselves from the yoke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

I wondered what President Wilson thought. Were the remnants of what were formerly Austria and Hungary proper, even with their new democratic councils, excluded from the countries to which he had addressed his appeal? And would not the appeal itself seem to these distracted and starving people a promise to all of them of friendship and protection in their effort to maintain order and to act with moderation and mercy? What encouragement it would give, but what hopes it would raise! But my job was uncomplicated by such considerations. It was merely to obtain the widest possible publicity. In order to do it, the appeal must be sent across the border into the countries to which it was addressed. I asked our Military Intelligence Department what they knew of conditions there and how I could send the message across. They

knew nothing at all. They had established no communication.

It seemed that the simplest way of sending the message would be through Italy. There, at least, the frontiers were opened to Italian officials, and the message could be sent for publication through official sources into the conquered and liberated countries. I went to see the Italian representatives. I showed them my cable from President Wilson and asked them what help they could give. They hesitated. Such things must be done in order, they said. There was an inter-Allied commission in Italy. Undoubtedly, the President's appeal had been sent directly to them as well as to me. Therefore it would be useless to send it a second time. They could not agree to take the appeal and forward it immediately to the inter-Allied commission, as I suggested; no, they must first ask if the commission had received a similar message. If they had not, they then could be asked to distribute it to the countries liberated from the Austro-Hungarian yoke. But the inquiry must go first. I said I was eager for what help they could give, and I asked if they would inquire at once. But such matters, they said, could not be hurried. It was well I did not trust entirely to them. Thirteen days later their answer came. They would be delighted to distribute the appeal. In that interval disorders might have broken out, revolutions might have succeeded one an-

other, violence and cruelty might already have stained forever the annals of the new age, for at such times things move quickly. At any rate, when their answer came it seemed like the day after the feast, but I accepted their offer of assistance and supplied them with all the translations and copies they would undertake to use. They made no report to me, so I never knew what they did; but even when I asked for their help I knew I must find other ways, too. But what other ways were there? I began to feel that the only safe and quick means was to send an agent of my own across the Swiss frontier. I telephoned again to the military attaché and asked if he could lend me any one to send. Tomorrow he would try to find some one—but that, too, was vague. I said I hoped he would try, but in the mean time I would find some one myself to-day. I had some one in mind to send, because only a few days before I had received a visit in my office from Rosika Schwimmer. She could go for me. She was a Hungarian and she would have a Hungarian passport. She could get across the frontier, and she knew the necessary languages. I was sure she would not be afraid, and she, a pacifist, would want to take a message appealing for peace. I had known her in the autumn of 1914, when she had come to America and had spoken at the National American Woman Suffrage Convention. She is a great orator, and had spoken like one inspired

of the horrors of war and of the hope of peace. She had made the most impassioned plea for women the world over to work unitedly for peace and had presented a resolution to the suffrage convention protesting against the war and the suffering of our sister women in Europe. As I remember it, her protests seemed to me to be protests against all war, and protests especially against Germany's aggression in bringing on this war. I believed that she was a sincere pacifist, although from the beginning she was freely accused of working in Germany's behalf, and even of being a German agent. Later she became notorious in this country as the organizer of the ill-fated Ford peace ship.

At the suffrage convention I had had a trial of strength with her. Her peace resolution was referred to the resolutions committee, of which Miss Jane Addams was chairman, and I a member. I was new in suffrage activities in those days, and, although I believed in peace and hated war, I fought hard during long hours of the night against the committee's accepting Madame Schwimmer's resolution. My opposition was on the ground that the object of the suffrage organization was a single one, and it should make no exception to its old rule of one plank only. If women wanted to do anything for peace, they should form another organization for that purpose. Madame Schwimmer came before the resolutions committee to urge her

resolution, and Miss Addams wanted it, but the committee decided against it. That was the only time I had seen Rosika Schwimmer before she called upon me in Berne.

Now, I knew she could be trusted to take the President's appeal well, and would be daunted by no hardship or dangers. Who could doubt it who had once seen her prominent chin and the determined look in her eyes? In the midst of orders for translations and printing and all the other things I had to do that day, I went to the Bernerhof Hotel to call on Madame Schwimmer. I found her in the entrance-hall. I told her I wanted to ask her help, but, as it was on a matter important to me, I should like first to see her credentials. How I hated to adopt the methods of diplomatic caution! Why did she not refuse to show me her papers and tell me to go about my business? But she must have grown familiar with such cautions, and, instead of resenting my request, she showed me the papers I wanted to see. She had letters as a representative of Karolyi, the head of the new democratic government in Hungary. She and Karolyi were both pacifists. They had both wanted Austria-Hungary to break away from Germany and make a separate peace, and Karolyi had urged it especially at the time that President Wilson had made his speech in January, 1918, containing the now famous fourteen points. I looked at all her papers carefully and then told her that I wanted

her to leave that night and take with her across the frontier printed copies of the President's appeal, for which she was to obtain the widest distribution in every language known in the Balkans. She was very busy herself, poor lady! She was tired, too, for she had just arrived in Switzerland after a trip of many hardships. But she has a gallant spirit and I overrode all objections. She agreed to go, and started at once to pull every wire known in order to have her passport visaed in time. She wanted to go because those war-distracted countries looked to America as their hope for peace and for food. They who remembered every word spoken by our President believed our spirit to be a liberal one. They believed America, with its great resources hardly yet strained, would come to the rescue of all starving lands. Madame Schwimmer herself, too, shared the common faith in Wilson and the common hope in America, and she was glad to go. I agreed to go as far as I could with her—to take her myself at least as far as the frontier.

There was a rumor that within Austria and Hungary the lines of communication, the railroads and telegraph-wires, which had not been destroyed, were already in control of the Allied military forces. If this was so, Madame Schwimmer, once across the frontier, would need a word explaining her mission to the Allied authorities. I went again to our military attaché to tell him that I had found an agent to take my message

across the frontier. I told him who it was and asked him for a note explaining the nature of her errand to whatever Allied forces might be in charge of the railroads. But in those days dangers were seen at every turn—Madame Schwimmer had been suspected. He refused to help in any way in such an undertaking. The assistant attaché, a man of foreign birth, was scornful, and asked, sneeringly, if I considered her a "serious person." That adjective, in its foreign use, means everything. A person who isn't "serious" might be anything that is bad or foolish. I asked if either of them had any definite information against her. I insisted that I had a right to be told all they knew, since I proposed to use her on such an errand. The only information that I could find was that she had been connected with the Ford peace ship, and that I had already known, and I did not feel that it interfered with her usefulness in this emergency.

There was the Minister, Mr. Stovall; perhaps he would help me out. You see how determined I was to get all the assistance possible. I went to see him. I explained to him that I had first appealed to the military attaché and the assistant attaché, and that they had refused to give me any help because of Madame Schwimmer. I assured him that I was not keen to run any risks of involving myself or any one else in a dangerous situation. I did not want to have his

own predictions of the failure of my work come true, but I had confidence in my own judgment and was sure I was making no mistake now. The Minister was perplexed. The second secretary of legation, whose particular gift is caution, was away and his advice could not be sought. The Minister evidently did not want to refuse to help with a message which had come so straight from the President with such explicit instructions for obtaining publicity. But he hesitated. How could it be done without committing himself to any responsibility? At last it was agreed that I should write out something which would not commit him, and if it was phrased with sufficient care he would consider signing it! Late that evening he came to my office and I had the note ready. He took it away for further consideration. He did not sign it, but he finally discovered what he felt was a way out of the dilemma. He had decided that he could not write or sign a letter directly for Madame Schwimmer to take, no matter how non-committal, but he felt he would not be running too great a risk if he wrote a note to me instead, saying that he hoped the agent whom I should select would be given facilities to take the message. I, in turn, was to write to Madame Schwimmer that she was my agent, and the chain would then be complete, and if anything awful resulted he would be at least two removes from the catastrophe and I would stand between him

and blame. He sent me such a letter,¹ but as it was written in a somewhat illegible longhand without the usual important-looking legation seal, or anything to show that it was official, or even *officieuse*, it did not promise to be of assistance—rather the contrary—in circumstances where suspicions would be keen. It might easily have brought upon an agent, in whose hands it was found, an accusation of forgery. Any careful official would have looked upon it with doubt.

Madame Schwimmer, undaunted by my failure to procure assistance for her, was ready to go. She had even found time in the hurry of the day's preparations to go to the printer's and correct the proof of the Hungarian translation. The pamphlets, printed on the very thinnest paper as ordered and neatly done up in packages, were delivered at nine-thirty o'clock that night as promised. Strange that for once something should have been done on time in Switzerland! I had had to use my motor all day and it was not ready for so long a journey. Again I was fortunate, because for once I found an American ready to help. He was a young officer then in charge of the United States Army Purchasing Department in Switzerland. He let me have one of his department motors and two chauffeurs; and he decided to come himself. Just twelve hours after the President's message had arrived

¹ Appendix XXXII.

our little party, accompanied by Sonny, started off about ten o'clock in the evening.

Through the night, as the motor rolled lumberingly along, Madame Schwimmer talked of all the trials that Hungary had suffered in the war. She talked of Austria and of the men and of the movements of which we had been hearing dimly through the closed frontiers during the long war years. She talked and then she slept. I did not want to sleep. I wanted to look out of the car at the beautiful country we were passing through. But the night was dark and I must have dozed more than I thought, because the time seemed so short and daybreak came so quickly. At six-thirty or seven o'clock we arrived at Bucks, the town on the Swiss side of the frontier into Austria. The border there is a river crossed by an old, covered, wooden bridge. At the end farthest from the Swiss shore a barricade of some sort had been erected. There were soldiers on the Swiss side guarding the approach to the bridge as well as stationed upon it, and military messengers were standing about, ready with motor-cycles.

We sought out the local officials. No one knew anything definite of conditions across that bridge. No one could tell us if trains ran or if telegraph-wires were intact. The only way to get Madame Schwimmer across was to take her over in the motor. There was a detachment of Swiss troops there and we went to the officer in charge. He

said that no one had yet been across from Switzerland, that there was grave danger in trying to go, that over the frontier there was a *sale désordre*, which, from his tone as well as his words, meant a "filthy mess." We could see for ourselves, he said, if we looked this way, that beyond the bridge there was a great mob clamoring dangerously behind the barriers; only the troops were holding them back. It looked as if trouble was imminent. He shook his head. He seemed to think we were quite mad to think of going.

We saw also the representatives of the American and Italian Red Cross. The latter I remember as a very fat man, who had been waiting patiently at Bucks to hear of the condition of Italian prisoners in Austria. He had had no news. He asked us, in case we succeeded in going across, to make inquiries for him.

Madame Schwimmer had her passport. She could go. The young American officer and I had no passports and no papers. I wanted to go with Madame Schwimmer and see her started on her job, or at least I wanted to know what the conditions were which she would have to meet. Madame Schwimmer was a good sport and was determined to go on, and she thought it would be an interesting experience for me, too, to go across the frontier with her. She wanted to have me go. The difficulty was not only about going, but about being allowed to return through the barriers and across the covered bridge into

Switzerland again, after we had once gone out. Madame Schwimmer telephoned to Swiss officials in Berne, and we obtained permission for my return in the motor. The young officer decided to come with us, too, and off we started into the unknown.

CHAPTER XII

STRIFE AND CONFUSION

I WAS tired and perhaps a little cross after the night in the motor and the hard work of the day before, but it seemed to me that there was never an adventure so tame. On the other side of the bridge behind the barricade, which opened for us and closed after us, the crowd seemed to me far from a clamoring, dangerous mob. It was merely a group of patiently waiting, ragged, hungry people, hoping to be let through the barriers into Switzerland where food and clothes could be had. There was an Austrian guard-house just over the bridge. It was in charge of soldiers in Austrian uniforms. They came out and perfunctorily looked through one of Madame Schwimmer's bags. They told us that, beyond, all was in confusion. They had received no orders since the armistice had been signed. They asked us no questions and they made no effort to see passports or papers.

The Austrian frontier, at one time, must have been well protected, because at short intervals there were several other guard-houses. Our

motor would stop; the Austrian officials in charge would come and look at us and shrug their shoulders, and on we would go. What could they do with a motor of one of the conquering governments? For all they knew, we might be—any one. We passed groups of soldiers walking along the roads who had evidently left the defeated Austrian army without ceremony and were making their way home. Some of them stopped, noticed the U. S. A. on the motor, and cheered us. They were young men who must have felt that anything was better than the continuance of the war conditions. How they must have rejoiced to be on their way home at last to the fields of their childhood and to the cottages in which they had been born! We went on to Feldkirch, the first town on the Austrian side, in the district of Vorrallberg. We went to the railroad station and found the same condition there as in the guard-houses. We were told that there was no effort at collecting customs, making examinations, or at censorship. Everything was in disorder and confusion, but there was no violence anywhere. Certainly we saw none. Word went about the town that American strangers were there, and the new officials, who were probably a self-constituted local authority, came to see us. We left the President's appeal with them. They received it warmly. They promised to publish it in the first issues that were printed of their papers. From them

we found that trains did run occasionally, but not on schedule; that the Allied authorities had not yet taken charge of the lines of communication. Poor Mr. Stovall! He might have been spared the difficulties of writing that note which was never used or needed, and which I took carefully back to him. The Vorrallberg officials said we could undoubtedly traverse the whole of Austria without question, and would probably receive a warm welcome everywhere.

We asked about the Italian prisoners and heard that there were some in Feldkirch—in fact, we saw them there—poor, ragged men! There had been attempts to send still more of them on to Feldkirch, thinking that from there they could go into Switzerland. But as yet Switzerland had not been able to arrange for their transportation across its territory and was refusing to admit them. Vorrallberg could not feed them, so they were not allowed to leave the trains and were sent back to Innsbruck. How tired they must have been, locked in freight-cars and shunted back and forth! The officials thought they were in great need and distress in Innsbruck.

Madame Schwimmer must go on to Innsbruck, but no one knew when a train would come and the officials suggested that we should motor there, where we would hear more accurate details of what was happening. They said that the drive to Innsbruck over the mountains was

one of the most beautiful in the world. Their simple pride in the beauty of their country was unrestrained, in spite of the distress and need which surrounded them. It could not be more beautiful, I thought, than the great mountains and deep valleys through which we had come that morning, as the sun rose and glinted through high, dark trees on a swift-running stream.

We grew practical at once. We considered the distance to Innsbruck and the time it would take. We wanted to go, but we found that we would not have gasolene enough to go there and return to Zurich, and no more could be found until we reached Zurich again. Also there was work to be done in Berne and time was pressing. The young officer, too, wanted to get back. He had not understood one word of the interminable German conversations we had had, and he had grown impatient. So Madame Schwimmer was left alone at the Feldkirch station to await an uncertain train, which might come along in a few hours and take her on to Innsbruck, where again she must wait for unscheduled connections.

Her instructions were to have the President's appeal translated and printed in the Czech, Slovak, Rumanian, Serbian, and Ruthenian languages, in addition to the languages in which it had already been translated and printed, and to have it distributed to all the newly constituted authorities and to all the newspapers, and to

have it printed upon large posters and displayed in all towns. Small handbills also were to be offered to various associations for distribution to their members. In fact, she was to leave no means untried to obtain the widest possible publicity for it.

No one could give an impression of greater self-reliance than Madame Schwimmer. But in spite of that, I hated to leave her standing there alone at the station. I felt, as I looked back at her from the motor, as if I were deserting her, leaving her to go for me into unknown dangers without protection. As it was, she was not doing it for me at all—but for an appeal for the cause in which she believed supremely—peace. She was going through familiar countries, among people whose languages she knew, to carry the appeal to the people of countries at one time related to her own. What she had to suffer was merely great discomfort and fatigue.

On our return across the bridge at Bucks we asked for the Italian Red Cross officer to give him the news he had wanted of the Italian prisoners. He was not at the hotel where we had first seen him; he was not at the station. He might be at the room which the Red Cross used as an office, but we found it closed. We asked for him everywhere, and finally at another little hotel, where he lived, we were told he had just started across the frontier himself! He had waited patiently on the Swiss side for days for

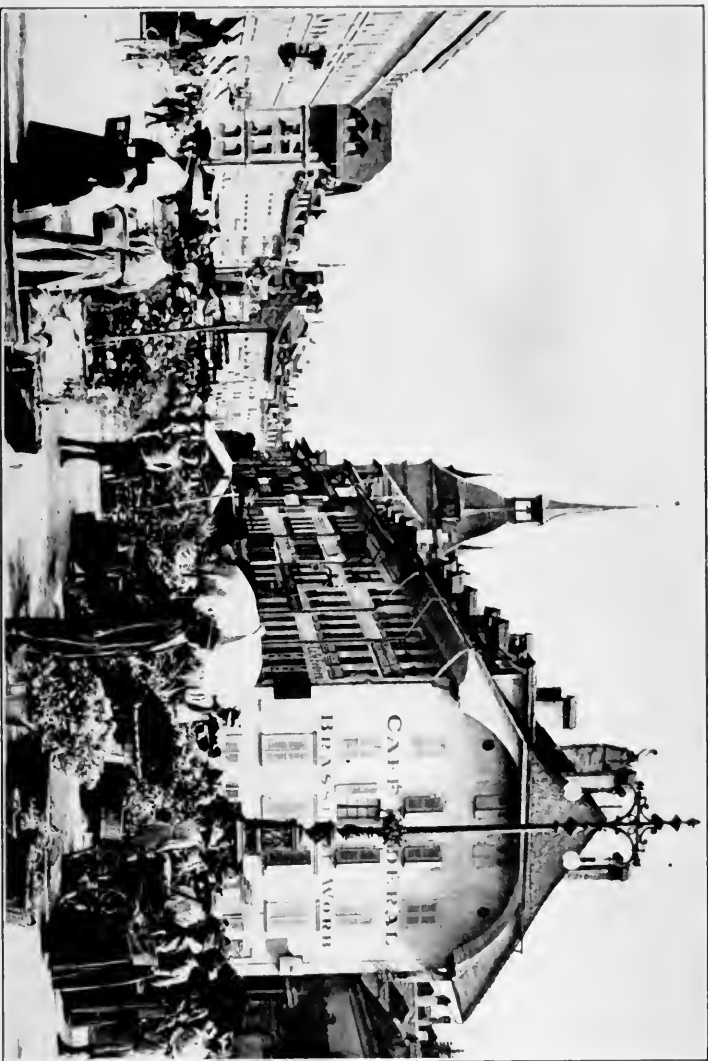
the information he needed, and now, when we were bringing it to him, he had gone himself to get it. The force of example was too much for him, I suppose, especially when set by two women!

We motored on steadily back to Berne. One chauffeur slept in his seat while the other drove. Toward night we lost a little time, as we got off the road going into Zurich, where we stopped for dinner and gasolene. The young officer was tired and cross and we were both impatient of delays. We finally arrived in Berne before daylight of Saturday morning.

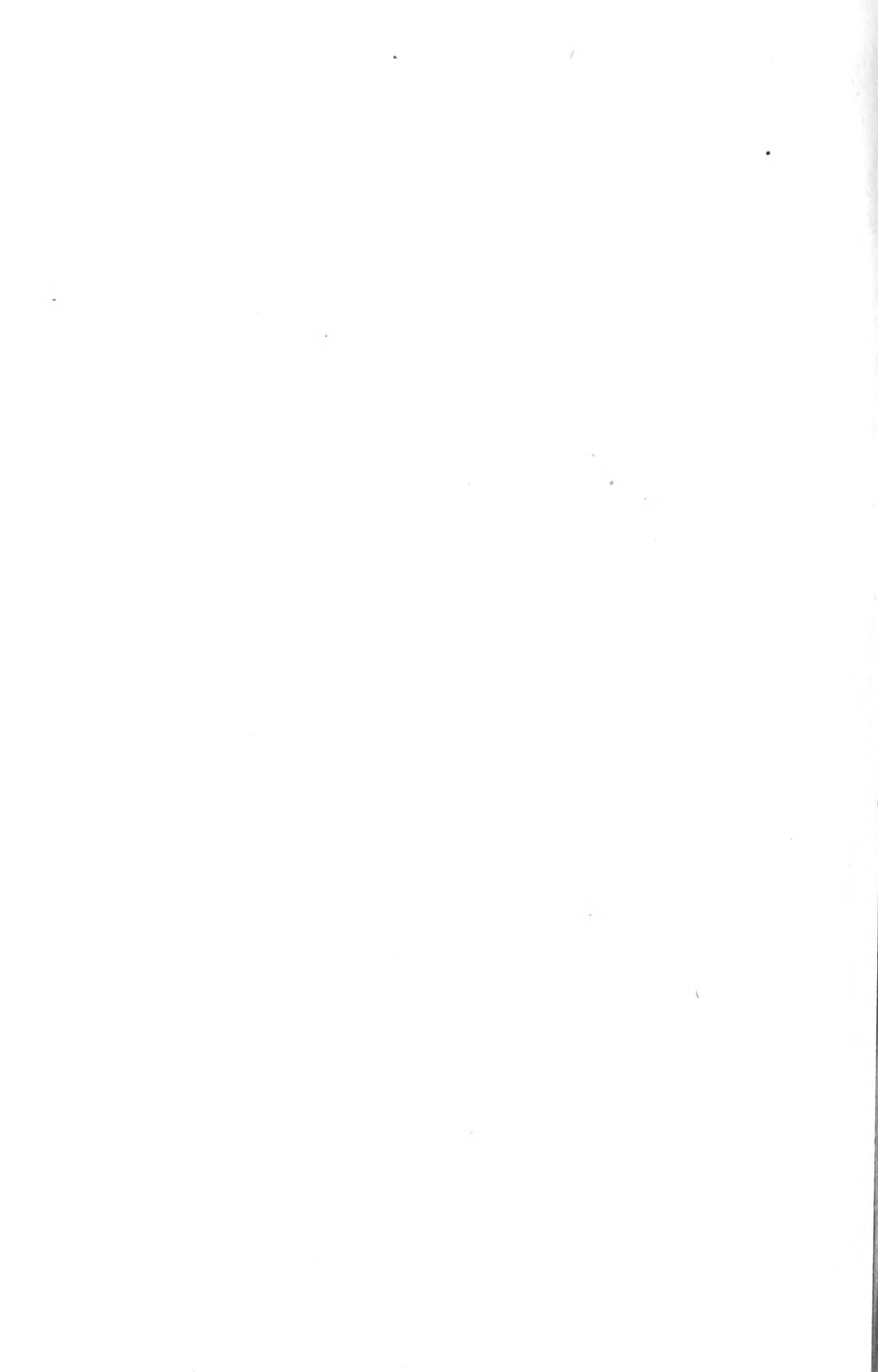
That morning at the office there was an accumulation of mail from my day's absence, but no morning letters or papers. The strike had begun. In Zurich, during the day, there were conflicts between the strikers and the troops. The strikers said they resented the great preparations of the Swiss government and its extensive mobilization to meet a mere demonstration. A workers' committee sat at a little city near Zurich called Olten and considered the situation. On Monday, November 11th, the one-day demonstration was turned into a strike of indefinite length, with the purpose of wringing from the government the concessions which the socialists and workers demanded. The government accepted the challenge and strengthened its preparations to subdue disorder. The strike was complete. Throughout Switzerland all industry was

paralyzed. There were no newspapers, mail, trains, or street-cars. All shops were closed. Berne looked like a city of soldiers. It was full of them. The cavalry, mounted on its handsome horses, patrolled the streets constantly. The artillery was lined up on the side-streets with its mounted guns ready for action; the horses stood patiently attached to the gun-carriages. The infantry was camped out in the stone-flagged market-place and in the open squares. During the day, except for the soldiers, the city seemed deserted, but at night great masses of people stood about in the strange, uncertain lights and shadows thrown by the electric lamps.

The market-place, where the winter before I had seen the old women of Berne sweeping, was especially crowded. It is in front of the Federal Palace in which the Parliament sat late each night, considering its knotty problems. The crowds stood silently or moved at times as a mass, when something called their attention to another place. Their order was astonishing. It was impossible to tell what proportion were strikers laboring under a feeling of injustice and bitterness and what proportion were contented citizens come out of their homes from curiosity to see what was happening. Occasionally a leaflet setting forth the strikers' grievances would appear mysteriously, struck off from the press of the Socialist paper—the one press which the strikers allowed to print. But it, too, shortly



MARKET-DAY ON THE PARLIAMENT SQUARE AT BERNE, SWITZERLAND



ceased operations as the government seized and suppressed it.

Protection was offered, to the offices of the foreign representatives, but I think none of us accepted it. We were warned that it was dangerous to go about in motors, so acute had class feeling grown, but I used mine steadily and had no trouble. Not even a stone was thrown at me. The hotels were well guarded by squads of soldiers outside and inside throughout the day and night. The soldier with his gun and long bayonet, who marched steadily up and down the square entrance-hall of the Bernerhof, gave me the first realization that there really might be an element of danger in the situation. It was hard to realize, because here again Switzerland reminded one of a play. The crowds seemed so patient and good-natured, they might have been a stage mob, before the moment came to stir itself to violence. The bright-cheeked country soldiers, with their horses and their guns and their becoming tin helmets designed by an artist, were charming to look at. They seemed to belong to the old town with its medieval arcades and its stone-paved squares. They should have worn shining armor. But as they were, in their gray-green uniforms, they were a good makeshift.

The situation, if there was real danger in it, was handled well by the authorities. For several nights the military bands played to the crowds,

and the demonstration seemed to me to take on an air of celebrating rather than protesting. I walked about each evening among the crowd and stopped to talk to men who appeared to be strikers. It seemed to me that while the leaders of the strike may have been connected with the international agitators and Bolshevists and may have received financial aid from them, the main body of strikers had no thought of a political uprising and would have hated more than anything else an overthrow of the government. One of the men I talked to was typical. He was a furniture-mover and he said that he worked all day at the hardest and heaviest of tasks, moving pianos and other big pieces; that his hours were very long and his pay was totally inadequate to take care of his family, and had become more and more inadequate, as the prices had risen during the war. There was seldom a time when he and his family were not actually hungry. He wanted an eight-hour day and better wages. Although he did not want to overthrow the government, he thought there could be an improvement. It was not a real democracy—not like ours in America, he said. He had a grievance against the seven Federal Councilors. Perhaps this was a sprout from a Bolshevik seed carefully sown. He believed that the proportional representation in Parliament would undoubtedly help. I thought that he, as well as the others I talked to, were astonishingly moderate and friendly. It

was difficult to picture such patient men flaring into violence. But perhaps the margin between such a demonstration and a revolution may be a narrower one than an onlooker like me is able to realize. On the part of the workers, a little more bitterness; on the part of the government, either a little more aggressiveness or a little weakness and nervousness, or an incident like a shot fired by an exasperated soldier, and the great crowd, with a determined leader at hand, might have surged into the Federal Palace—a revolution to succeed or to fail.

November 11th was the day when the strike was renewed. We knew the armistice was to be signed that day, but we received no details of the signing. In Geneva and Lausanne, where the strike was less effective and where sympathy for the Entente was great, there were public celebrations. But in Berne the authorities were stern in their neutrality. In the midst of the crowds which gathered on the streets that night, because of the strike, I saw a handful—ten or twelve, perhaps—of the interned French war prisoners in their blue uniforms form a line, each man with his hands on another man's shoulders, and wind through the crowd, singing the "Marseillaise." It was a pitiful effort at celebrating the greatest war event in the history of their country. Another handful gathered in a little restaurant under the arcades, and they, too, sang the "Marseillaise"—what Frenchman could

resist it! And for this infraction of Swiss neutrality they were arrested and punished by the Swiss or by the Canton Berne authorities.

This week, when there was rejoicing in all the Entente countries, there was sadness as well as strife throughout Switzerland. Each day seemed longer than the one before. The strike continued and the Spanish gripe broke out again in the most virulent form, and especially among the mobilized country boys. Seven or eight hundred of them died within a few days. School-houses and other public buildings were turned into hospitals, and the Swiss women, untrained in work outside of their homes, were called upon in this emergency not only to nurse the patients, but to organize and manage the hospitals. One of these women in Zurich told me that they had sighed for the help of American women who knew how to do things, and she told me of some of the difficulties they had to face because of their lack of experience. One little thing, which I remember because it seemed so natural an oversight, was that when the patients were brought in, undressed, and put to bed, all of their clothes were sent to be washed or disinfected and no one thought of keeping a record of any man's belongings! How could they think of such a detail in their eager efforts to save lives? But when the men got well, each one wanted his own clothes, the shirt he liked, the shoes that fitted him—and there was only a

great mass of unassorted, unidentified wearing-apparel. The Swiss ladies were distressed beyond measure at their own thoughtlessness and the resulting confusion.

In our office there was, to a great extent, enforced idleness, because the mails did not come and the papers were not printed. Work on pamphlets ceased. Our wireless and telegraph service came through uncertainly, but we got it out as well as we could. I cabled to Washington on November 12th, recommending that all of our activities except the news service be abandoned, and offered my resignation, suggesting adequate arrangements for the continuance without me of the committee's work, which was now so firmly established. The following day I repeated my resignation, because I was afraid I had not made my desire sufficiently emphatic. After an interval, answers came approving my suggestions, but refusing my resignation. I was told that my "resignation would embarrass the work of the committee," and was asked "to stick like a good soldier." But the bottom had dropped out of it for me. I felt there was nothing more to be done that I could do better than others, and there would be no longer work enough to keep me busy and satisfied.

The strike soon began to fail. Its end was hastened by the epidemic, which did not spare the strikers, and because the cities were dependent upon the country districts for much of their

daily food-supply, and when trains did not run a large part of the necessities of life was cut off. For instance, prepared milk evidently was not in general use or available then in the Swiss cities, as it is in ours, and the fresh milk which had to be brought in on trains from even the nearest country districts could not be delivered. There were no horses or motors to move it. The babies especially suffered, we heard, and the babies of the strikers were not exempt. To meet this situation and save their own children, the strikers proposed to run one morning train each day into the cities, but the government stepped in and said either all trains or none. Before the end of the week the strike was over in Berne and a few days later the Olten committee called it off in Zurich. I was given by a Swiss official a statement for publication in America, saying that the Olten strike committee had been forced to order the cessation of the strike without any concessions whatsoever being made by the government, and that people of all Switzerland, east as well as west, had united to support the ancient democratic institutions of their country against the assaults of Russian Bolshevism.

The Parliament, however, felt the force behind the demands of the strikers and appointed a committee to work out the details of an election to be held the following spring under the new system of proportional representation. It



THE HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT IN BERNE, SWITZERLAND



began on its own initiative to plan for other reforms which had been demanded.

Telegraphic and postal communication was soon restored. The papers resumed their issues, the shops opened again, and everything seemed to return to normal conditions, but the strike left its trail throughout the country. One of the extreme Socialist or Bolshevik papers said, in the bitterness of defeat, that at least the epidemic of grippe had been on the side of the workers and had revenged their wrongs by the heavy toll in death which it had exacted from the peasants who had been mobilized as soldiers. They openly rejoiced over their fellow-countrymen who had died. The antagonism that ensued between the industrial and agricultural classes was extreme and will probably long remain to embitter Swiss life.

I soon heard from Madame Schwimmer. She telegraphed, saying that the progress of her journey was very hard, but in spite of all difficulties she had been able to send President Wilson's appeal by courier to the National Councils and the respective national governments of Voralberg, Tyrol, Hungary, Rumania, Slovakia, German Hungary, Galicia, Poland, and Croatia. "The widest publication," she said, "has been obtained." On November 9th it was in all Austro-German papers.

Doctor Kot, the Polish courier, she reported had agreed to send couriers immediately to

Warsaw for the Polish National Council of Galicia, as the Liquidation Committee of Cracow; to the National Council for Polish Silesia at Teschen; to the Ukrainian National Council at Lemberg. "I can already inform you," she said, "that the appeal has been taken up everywhere with great sympathy and much understanding."

Soon telegrams of acknowledgment and appreciation from the Councils at Prague, Agram, and other capitals came to my office or to the legation in Switzerland, to be forwarded to America.

A week or ten days later Madame Schwimmer returned to Switzerland, and brought with her a number of strange-looking papers as samples of the publicity that the appeal had obtained.

Shortly after her return she was appointed diplomatic representative to Switzerland of the new Hungarian Republic, the first woman to be appointed to such a post. She lived in the Bernerhof Hotel and I saw her occasionally. She suffered as all pioneers must suffer. She was the victim of jealousy on the part of the men who had hoped for her position and on the part of women who never under any circumstances could have obtained it. There was gossip of the pettiest kind about every little thing she did. Undoubtedly Madame Schwimmer felt that her distinguished position demanded elegant surroundings and a fashionable appearance. Perhaps she felt that in the diplomatic game of

Europe such things have an importance and a weight, and I think they still may have. Perhaps she enjoyed them herself. At any rate, she had a handsome apartment at the Bernerhof, a luxurious motor, and a well-cut fur coat. What gossip raged about the purchase of that coat! Why should she, the gossips asked, clothe herself in expensive furs and live as she did, when there was such suffering in her country? If she had gone about shabbily and lived simply, undoubtedly the gossips who wanted to complain would have said that she was disgracing her post and would have compared her unfavorably with her distinguished and fashionable predecessors. But petty gossip, although it undoubtedly told against her, was the least of the troubles this pioneer had to face. Her connection with the Ford peace ship seemed to stand as an ever-growing reproach. It was said that in America she was looked upon with hatred, and to America alone, her country—Hungary—must turn for help. Switzerland, ever proud to proclaim itself the oldest republic, balked in the twentieth century at accepting a woman diplomatic representative. They disregarded intelligence, energy, experience—any and every quality—and decided that masculinity in itself was what they wanted! Our own Minister, too, objected to her, although he, in his official position, could have no relation whatever with the diplomatic representative of a country still technically

at war with us. But what was the world coming to, in the eyes of a Southern reactionary, if the very distinguished career of diplomacy with all its ancient traditions—a career of which he himself was a member—opened its ranks to women! Madame Schwimmer was a woman, and that in itself should have ruled her out. But there was another objection, too. One day when I had called on Mr. Stovall in his large and comfortable office, on some business matter, he detained me as I stood at his desk, about to leave. He wanted to make it plain to me that he disapproved of Madame Schwimmer's appointment. By his manner he seemed to hold me responsible for it. At least she and I were both women! He said she was neither an Austrian nor a Hungarian, but of a "third race." His tone was reminiscent of the time when suffragists were spoken of as members of a "third sex." That is a time so long ago that most of us have happily forgotten it or have never known it, but Mr. Stovall, I suspect, could still be tempted to use the term. When he spoke of Madame Schwimmer as belonging to a "third race" I knew it meant something he did not like, but I did not at first know what it was. I stood and looked out of his window on to the terrace and lawns and distant fields while I hurriedly ran over in my mind the many races of the Balkans and wondered which he might mean. I said: "She isn't a German. Do you

mean she is a Magyar or a Czech? In fact, she is only a bourgeois Hungarian Jewish woman." "That's it!" he said. Madame Schwimmer, in addition to being a woman, is a Jewess—an unforgivable combination to so distinguished a diplomat as our American Minister. He may have foreseen the time when peace would be concluded between Hungary and his own country, and undoubtedly the prospect of receiving her as a confrère was not pleasant to him. "We ought to do better than that," he said.

In the mean time, gossiped about and schemed against, Madame Schwimmer worked away night and day establishing a Hungarian publicity office and trying to organize a competent diplomatic and consular service from the broken remnants left from the old Austro-Hungarian régime. She was busy with a thousand and one things of which only so active a person could have thought. She worked unremittingly to reach the various Allied representatives, through them trying to send to the Peace Conference information that would show the precarious condition of the democratic government established in Hungary, and to warn them of the dangers of Bolshevism which would attend its overthrow. Night and day she was busy working with all her might to obtain the assistance she felt her country needed.

There she was, a storm-center, busy and lonely, when I left Switzerland. Weeks later I

saw, with a sigh, that she had resigned her post. The opposition had proved too much for her. Perhaps she became convinced that some one else—a man—could serve her country better than she. How her strong pride must have revolted at her defeat! Undoubtedly her problems were different from mine, but no one could measure the bitterness of her disappointment better than I, who the previous March had cabled my own resignation rather than be guided by the fears and fallacies of our diplomatic corps.

CHAPTER XIII

THE END OF THE YEAR

DURING this time my attention was centered upon going home. When the cold had come again in Switzerland, and the snow lay again upon the ground, it seemed almost incredible to me that I was still there, because all summer I had been so sure that the war would be soon over and I free to leave. Now the war was won and another winter was here, but I was still held at my post. There was no need for it. My leaving could not embarrass the Committee on Public Information. A successor could easily be found—some one, perhaps, released from other war-work. There was nothing difficult about the work of our office now. It could go on mechanically. There was no longer an enemy propaganda to combat or a blind enemy to instruct. The German papers themselves were full of praise of President Wilson and of things American. The Swiss press, too, was unrestrained in its admiration. When President Wilson started on his first trip to Europe, which caused such violent protests here in America, one

pro-German German-Swiss paper headed its leading article, "The Savior Sails Upon the Sea."

Of course the news was not all one-sided. There was an effort on the part of other countries to exaggerate the political discord in America, and to point to President Wilson's waning influence here. The propaganda struggle turned into new channels, inspired by after-the-war commercial rivalries; and in this new struggle I felt I had no part.

The demand for American news had become insistent. Commercial agencies could enter the field and supply it as a business proposition. Yes, my work was done, and appeals to me "to stick like a good soldier" fell on deaf ears. I determined to go. But I must wait a little, because the heads of the foreign work of the Committee on Public Information were leaving America to establish themselves in Paris. I should see them there and talk over many details before I left.

My desire to leave, strong as it had been for months, was strengthened now by a new situation that arose—a situation from which in itself I wanted to escape.

After the armistice with Austria-Hungary was signed the agents and representatives of the countries east of Switzerland, some of which were technically still our enemies, would come to me constantly with stories of the suffering and wrongs of their countries and of the griev-

ances each one had against the other. Undoubtedly these men hoped that I would pass on their stories to more important authorities. Most painstakingly I would explain that I was not in a position even to give to any one in authority information that came to me, no matter how vitally interesting. I would tell them, over and over again, that my only work in Switzerland was to gain publicity for American news; that I sent back to America no reports of any sort, secret or otherwise, except as to my own work. But they would not believe it. They were so trained in secret methods that it seemed impossible for them to understand; it was, in fact, plainly incredible to them that any government agent or representative could be doing merely what he claimed to be doing. Since I said I was the director of American publicity in Switzerland, then I must be, in reality, something else. So, in spite of my protests, they kept coming to me. Or, it may have been, if they did believe me in the end, that they felt driven to talk to any one from America—the Land of Promise. In the same way they went with their stories and appeals to the Red Cross representatives.

These interviews were a painful experience to me. You can see how it would affect any one to hear of suffering upon which he had no right to comment, to which he had hardly a right to listen, even if it were suffering by enemies in righteous payment of crimes.

Vienna was starving, or about to starve, in the winter of 1918-19. Austria complained that Hungary had food, but wouldn't share it. Hungary asked, How could she? She had no way of moving the food which she had. She needed coal for transportation as well as for her industries, or her own people would starve. Budapest, itself, they said, was threatened with as great a food shortage as that from which Vienna was suffering. An American food representative then in Switzerland said he did not believe that Hungary was speaking in good faith. If she were really willing to share her food with Austria, as she protested, the lack of coal need not stop her. She could cut down her forests for fuel. Hadn't America shown the way? We had burned the crops from our fields as fuel when coal ran short here, he said. The Hungarian agents explained that their forests were in the outlying mountain districts. The trees had not only to be cut down, but sawed, then transported and distributed, before they would be useful as fuel. The transportation system in Hungary had broken down and coal was needed to get it started again. The Czechoslovaks had something to say to this, because the coal had to come from Germany through the territory they held. Such tangled claims to consideration! And the men who talked of them were not novices in pleading. They were artists in presenting their country's problems and they

made the map of eastern Europe become a living thing for me.

I remember in particular a man who had been in the Austrian Military Intelligence Service before that country's surrender, and who seemed himself to experience every pang of hunger and of human suffering which was endured in Vienna and in all the other places of which he told me. To look at him, you would never suspect such dramatic power as he possessed. He was a heavy, stolid-looking man with bushy eyebrows and small, grayish side-whiskers; a burly, middle-aged military man. He came to see me several times and pleaded, in a mixture of broken English and rapid German, in behalf of all the hungry and suffering. One day he talked of what Serbia, his country's enemy, had endured. He called me to the map which hung on the wall in my office opposite the long table where I sat. He pointed with a pencil to a spot on the plains in the north of Serbia, and he said this was territory, watered by a great river, naturally fertile and beautiful, that had been fought upon over and over again until the desolation there was beyond one's imagination to picture. He told of its being occupied by Austrian troops. In cases of military occupation, he said, there generally were left of the country's inhabitants only the women and children and old men. But here, he said, there were no men at all. They had all been killed or had gone away to fight—

even the very oldest. The women and children only were there. He said their condition was pitiable, for, although they tried to work the fields, the destruction had been so complete that they could not wring a living from the land. Their implements had been destroyed, their homes burned, and their men killed; and he spoke of the bitter discouragement, the bitter suffering they must have endured—these women who had tried under unimaginable hardships to feed themselves and their children; these women who had lost all of their men in battle. Then he went on to tell me that in occupied countries the invading armies counted upon living somewhat on the land, but here they could not—there was nothing for them. The Austrian soldiers, he said, who were quartered there were not generously rationed, because Austria itself was short of food. But they were so touched by the pitiable condition of these enemy women and children that they made a practice of sharing with them what little rations they had. The Austrians, he said, were a kind-hearted people, not cruel and hard, as we believe the Germans to be. His story, of course, was planned to show the Austrians in a kindly light. But he drew a vivid picture of it all. I had known almost nothing of Serbia, and whenever I had heard of it had always seemed very far away. In Berne I had met the handsome Serbian Minister and his beautiful wife several times. I had dined

with them once and the conversation had touched interestingly upon many political and social questions, but it was left to an enemy propagandist to stir my heart for their country.

The other countries, too, all had their griefs and fears and vague hopes. I heard of the terrible oppression of Rumania. I was told of Transylvania's fears; of the Tyrol and its troubles. The new Bulgarian Minister called upon me, but his manner was constrained; and it was from others that I heard chiefly of what Bulgaria, too, was enduring. There were Lettonia and Lithuania and many others. Sometimes I lost patience over the stories and complaints that came to me, especially from our enemy countries, because, with Belgium's fate so vividly before us, the wrongs of other conquered nations faded into insignificance.

I heard these stories with an ever-growing reluctance. The impression they made upon me was painful. It was not only of suffering because of the war, but of an indescribable confusion; of a great failure of men in one section of the world to govern themselves in the light of civilization. Political and economic principles in the stress of defeat were scrapped. All was in chaos. One of the chief failures of these countries was that they had not produced men of constructive minds, who could cope with the ruin about them, who had the strength to bring order out of the chaos. Again I was struck with the need of

men big enough for leadership in so great a world's crisis. Failing outstanding leaders, a higher general average of the whole people must be the salvation of self-governing nations. But how was it here? Leaders and people alike seemed totally inadequate to control or direct the situation. They had no confidence in themselves or in each other. Everywhere there were men and groups struggling for power. In each country there were rival factions of petty men. And each little faction looked to the conquering Allies for a token of recognition, a little support to strengthen its position over its own rivals at home. The struggle was bitter for any scrap of recognition, no matter how small. If President Wilson could even mention in a speech on another subject this or that man, it would be something for the man's faction to seize and magnify! The struggle went on, the confusion grew. But to these countries in their dark and difficult circumstances there seemed to be one solution to which they all turned—a League of Nations. To them it was to be a higher power that would see justice administered throughout the world and would protect small nations from greedy neighbors; a means of justice to those to whom the great nations want to be just and to those to whom they do not want to be just. They came to look to it as the one power to bring order out of the chaos and to make the world happy. It was to be the magic solution

of all otherwise insoluble problems, and President Wilson was the mighty champion of this great ideal.

Boundless hopes of a new world order were built upon a League of Nations in the confusion of late 1918, there where all the world met in Switzerland. There seemed to be no suspicion then that, after all, it might prove a disappointment, since it was to be conceived and put into execution by mere human beings, working out the biggest problems of government, not in calmness and with an altruistic vision, but at a time when passions were hot and hatreds bitter.

But these were problems with which I had nothing to do. I could not help solve them. I wanted to escape from hearing of them all; from the pressure which was put upon me by the visits of the representatives, official and unofficial, of all these struggling countries, who seemed to drift all in a jumble at one time or another into my office.

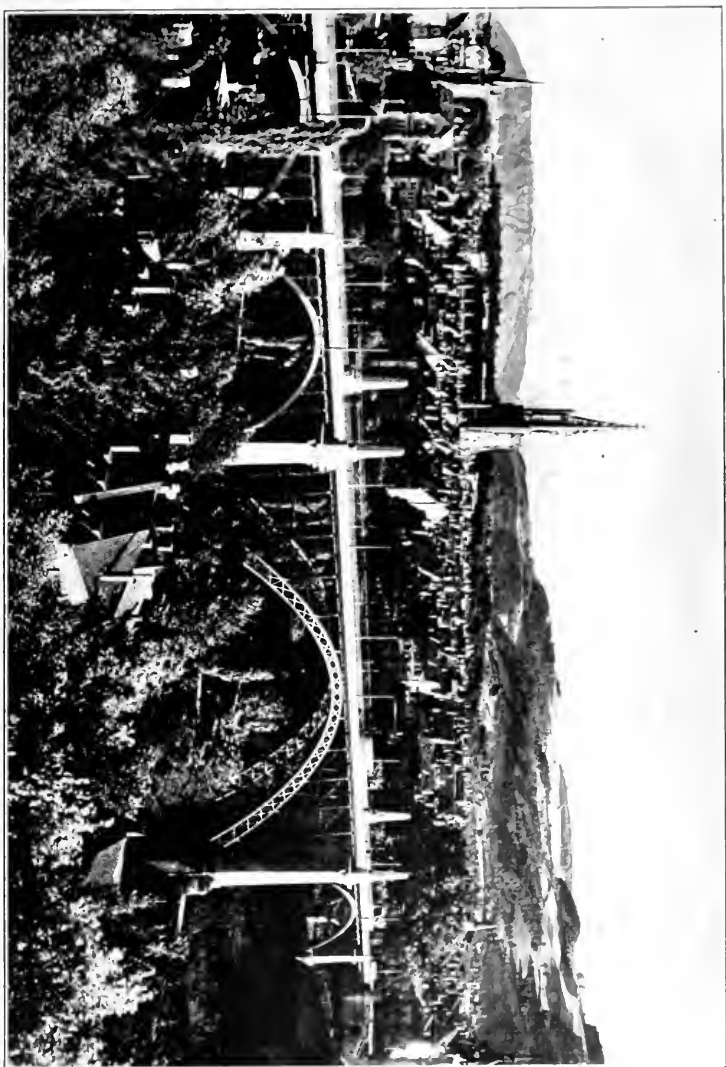
At the end of November I felt the greatest relief when I heard that the officials from the Committee on Public Information were arriving in Paris. I went there to meet them. I found they still wanted to keep me in Switzerland, but I was firm in my determination to leave. I agreed, however, to go back once more to Berne and wait there a reasonable time for my successor.

On this visit Paris had seemed strange to me

with its long rows of cannon up and down the Champs-Élysées, with its parades and gay crowds. Its griefs were forgotten for the moment in open rejoicing. I felt a stranger, although I, too, rejoiced that the great war was over at last. I hurried my arrangements and went back to Berne at the earliest moment to await my final release.

I remember that last lonely return to Switzerland very vividly. Though hostilities had ceased, the French frontier into Switzerland was closed and I was the only passenger on the little train that ran between Bellegarde and Geneva. There at the station, when I got off the train, was Leon, my French *interné* chauffeur, to welcome me with an air of excitement. His blue eyes were sparkling and I asked him what had happened. Nothing—only that madame was back again. It had been my first absence since he had come into my service, and life had probably seemed dull to him with his active employer away. I am going to tell you about Leon, because he, with his boyish eagerness, is one of the vivid memories of my last days in Switzerland.

When I had returned from America to Switzerland in June I found that a motor had become a necessity for my work, because the train service in Switzerland had almost ceased to exist. There were no Sunday trains at all. Even motors in Switzerland were allowed only to officials, diplomats, and physicians. I waited for



PANORAMA OF BERNE SEEN FROM THE SCHÄTZEL



one to be assigned to me from the American army, but finally I was driven to buy one of the few second-hand cars obtainable in Switzerland. Nothing later than a 1914 car existed and the prices charged were enormous. I chose an open Fiat that could take me well over the Swiss mountains. The army provided gasolene. I applied to the Interned French Prisoners' Bureau for a chauffeur and Leon was sent to me. He was a big, broad-shouldered, blond Frenchman with bright blue eyes and a little yellow mustache; only twenty-four or five years old. He had been a taxicab driver in Paris, he said, boastfully, before the war. His pride in his former occupation seemed to me excessive, although any one who has been in Paris knows that there must be a big element of danger and chance in it; and it probably stood to him as the epitome of valor and recklessness. After he was mobilized he drove a staff motor. In the retreat of 1914 the General Staff for which he was driving was surprised one morning at daybreak by the approach of the Germans. The officers of the staff crossed a bridge, too small for automobiles, and blew it up, leaving the chauffeurs to destroy their motors and save themselves, if they could. They succeeded in destroying the motors, Leon said, but were captured themselves. That was his story. For three years he had been a prisoner in Germany before he was interned in Switzerland. There he had been for a year,

making bead necklaces or wooden boxes or some of the useless things that prisoners were allowed to make. I asked why they were not trained to real work, and I was told that it would interfere with the labor situation in Switzerland.

When Leon was sent to me I explained that the place would not be an easy one. He would not expect easy work, he said. Hadn't he served in the French army? Wasn't he a sergeant? The first night I employed him I started off to Basel and Zurich. All went well until Leon was to come for me one morning in Zurich at four o'clock. I had an appointment in my Berne office at nine. My Swiss friends with whom I was staying insisted upon getting up in the cold and the dark to see me off. There was no motor. We sat shivering at the table in the dining-room and waited. Finally we telephoned the hotel where Leon was staying and found he had been sleeping soundly—so soundly he couldn't be waked. He came for me hours late. Would a French employer have discussed the matter there and then? Leon seemed to expect it and was ready with excuses, but I made no comment. That afternoon, in Berne, I told him I was not going to keep him. My work was important; I could not miss appointments. I needed a chauffeur who could always be on time. His face was horror-stricken. He was full of excuses. He must have felt that he could not go back to the bead necklaces. He stood there glued to the

spot, and told me he had had a military training; that he himself had been in command of men. He could be on time hereafter and he asked me to try him just once, once more, and he would never again be late. I relented, and he never was late again. I think he loved his work. He hated to be left behind the night I took the President's message to the Austrian frontier. He had been driving all day, but he was sure, he said, he could stay awake and drive all night, and the next day, too, and the night after. He hovered about the hotel entrance with his motor until we had left, hoping to the last to be taken along.

The night trips must have seemed full of a rare romance to him; when we went through the sleeping Swiss villages, quiet as death, he would take off the muffler and blow his siren and put on full speed. I would lean forward and say through the noise, "Really, Leon, you mustn't do that." But at the next village he would do it again. Did he picture to himself, with a thrill, the Swiss turning over in their soft beds and wondering what adventurous spirits were abroad at such an hour?

We seldom talked. I was always preoccupied and it must have taken courage for him to approach the great subject he had in mind. He had heard I was going to take Hedwig back to America with me and he wanted to go, too—to the Land of Promise. I explained that in Amer-

ica I was merely a private citizen and lived in New York quietly as other people do. There were no night or early-morning tours. There, my life was orderly. Perhaps he did not quite believe that a person so erratic as I must have seemed to him could lead a life without excitement. He wanted to go. He wanted it with the same determination he had shown over staying when I was going to discharge him. He did not know a word of English, not one. I imagined an encounter between him and a Fifth Avenue traffic policeman, and I saw that there would be difficulties in store for us. But he said they were nothing. He said he would learn English very easily. He knew he could, because it was exactly like German! and in his three years in Germany he had learned a little German. It was very little: "*Lincks?*" "*Recht?*" "*Wie weit?*" was about all he knew. He bought a phrase-book and started to study. Well, I gave in and agreed to take him. He showed the greatest enterprise in making his arrangements. When he met me in Geneva, on my return from Paris, he had it all planned out. The French soldiers interned in Switzerland were now being sent back to France. I was to have him demobilized in Switzerland and take him back to America with me. But I told him he would have to stay and drive my successor. That worried him a little, but I think he meant not to do it. I should not have been surprised to find him a stowaway on my steamer.

What he proposed to do was not easy. We had to struggle with endless French regulations and red-tape. When objections were made he was incredulous. He was confident, if I would only try, I could overcome every obstacle. But in spite of his enterprise, in spite of the many appointments which he himself would make for me with French officers, his plans failed, and about the middle of December it seemed that he must return to his regiment in France. When I told him this final decision I was struck by the look on his face. For the first time there was no hope—no incredulous smile. He did not argue. What was the matter with the boy, I wondered. I told him that when he was finally demobilized he could come over to America. I would pay his way and make his arrangements then. Yes, he nodded his head. I asked in the office if anything was wrong with Leon, he seemed so quiet. I heard that for three days he had been ill with the Spanish grippe. He had seen a doctor, who had told him to go to bed. But he wouldn't, although he had then a temperature of 104°. Was he afraid that I would think that he, a French soldier, was shirking? Had I been too severe with him when he had failed before? I was going early next morning—a Saturday—to Geneva. I told him to go to bed at once and I'd get some other chauffeur to drive me. He protested that he himself would be well enough in the morning to go. He would

be there at the hotel early with the car, he said. He was so positive that he almost convinced me, although I had felt his burning hand. But in the morning he did not come and I started off a little late with another chauffeur. On Monday, when I came back, I found that Leon had been taken from his boarding-house to a hospital. The epidemic was waning and the hospitals were less crowded. That evening, after my work was over, I went to see him and found him in a clean and beautifully appointed place, a few kilometers outside of Berne. I had had the grippe myself recently, so I was allowed, after much talk and many protests on the part of the hospital authorities, to go to the ward where the severe cases were isolated. I was told he was very ill. There was already grave doubt as to his recovery. But he didn't look ill—not as little Hedwig had looked. His bright blue eyes were brighter than ever, his clear skin was clearer. He recognized me at once and was glad to see me. But he was delirious and told me I had come just in time to save him. Why had I been so long? he asked. He thought, poor boy, that he was imprisoned again and in some danger and that I could rescue him. The next evening I went again; he smiled his recognition, but already he was too weak to speak intelligibly. That night he died. Under the seat of the motor we found a little leather case, and in it was a bit of dried edelweiss and a photograph of a German soldier—a

boy like Leon, himself; some one who had been kind to him in his three years' imprisonment; some one who, in spite of wars and of official commands, had become a friend. Poor Leon!

In the mean time my successor, Mr. Guy Crosswell Smith, had arrived, and the day of my leaving was soon determined. Before going I took him to see many of the men I had grown to know in Switzerland, who had helped our work in one way or another. We went to Basel, where we saw the editors of the *National Zeitung*, one of whom, an Austrian, had idealized President Wilson and wanted more than anything in the world to see him, merely to clasp his hand if he should come to Switzerland. There we saw the editors of the *Basler Nachrichten*, who had stood so stanchly by the pro-German Colonel Egli. We went to Zurich and saw other editors and authors and men of affairs. We motored through the country and stopped at medieval castles, to see statesmen and officials. One old castle, built in the midst of a little village, miles off the main road, high on a hillside overlooking a broad, snow-covered valley, seemed to me a glimpse of another age. There was something fairylike and homelike, too, in its charm. Here a statesman lived in modern comfort, surrounded by old traditions, working over great plans whereby Switzerland should nobly profit by all she had learned during the war from other countries.

We saw professors and students in their quiet studies in quaint, small towns. We saw Doctor Laur, called the "peasants' Christ," a little, bearded man with luminous eyes and gentle manner, whose dignity and charm would have made him grace any rank of life.

On our return to Berne we saw President Calonder and other officials and statesmen. These men had all been kind in some way—simple and human. I recalled little incidents of kindness one after another.

There was Doctor Buhler, the editor of the *Bund*. I was grateful to him because he had helped me one day during the strike, when a message had come to the starving nations, east of Switzerland, to tell them that Hoover was going to send food to them. The telegraph-wires were down, the trains were not running. I wanted publicity for the message at once. I wanted to send it out over the Swiss wireless. But the Swiss wireless, which was used only for military purposes, was in charge of the Swiss General Staff, still determinedly pro-German. I could not approach them myself. I went to Doctor Buhler and asked him to arrange it for me now, at once! I persuaded him to come with me in my motor, although it was the busiest time of his day—his paper was just going to press. I took him to the Federal Palace to see the President and to see General Wille of the General Staff, and it was all done.

Doctor Laur, too, had shown himself surprisingly just and liberal. In the early days I had complained to him of the bitterness against the United States of some of the editors of agricultural papers. They held the United States responsible, by its entrance into the war, for the war's continuance. Their attitude had seemed to me unneutral. He had reproved the writers of whom I had complained, and the whole question had been taken up by the agricultural societies and resulted in a better feeling toward us, I felt.

Not only with the people I had known, but with people I had seen every day, I had had some friendly contact; little human bonds had grown up that were hard to break. The couriers at the hotel had all liked Sonny and had always had a friendly word to say to him as they opened the doors for his coming and going. The head waiter himself had always fed him. The *concierge* had been a friend of Hedwig and had grieved with me when she died.

Now, at the moment when my great desire was to be gratified, when I was to start on my way home, I was filled with the greatest friendliness for these people among whom I had lived and worked—with whom I had not always agreed, but whom I had grown to understand and like more and more as the months went by. Every one, from the President to the simplest peasant, seemed a friend at the hour of my leav-

ing, and I asked them all—statesmen, couriers, *concierge*, head waiter—to come to see me if they should ever come to America. Tears were not far from our eyes when I said good-by.

It was Christmas Day when Sonny and I started home alone together. And now we are here, in safety and comfort—happy in our own home. In looking back over the year with its record of loneliness and trials and hard work and its rewards of accomplishment, with its friendships and its losses, it seems to me a very crowded, far-away period. I look at Sonny sometimes and I like to feel that, when no one else notices, he understands the smile that the memory of some of our Swiss experiences brings to me, as well as the tear that sometimes comes when I think of the things that wrung our hearts in those days that he and I lived through together away from home.

A friend of mine who, like me, is unused to writing, but who has written a much-read book of his diplomatic experiences, tells me that the end of such a book is the most difficult part to write, for there you must draw your conclusions.

But I am not going to end by drawing any conclusions from this record of my year as a government agent. They seem to me either too obvious or too confused. I shall simply leave the record as it is, as accurate and honest as I can make it, to speak for itself.

APPENDICES



APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Washington D. C. 7.38 P.M. Dec. 24, 1917.

*Mrs. Norman Whitehouse,
118 East 56th St., New York*

Agree to all requests and ideas as outlined in your letters. Engage passage earliest moment and come Washington Friday for Passports credits and full instructions.

*[Sgd] George Creel.
8.18 P.M.*

APPENDIX II

*George Creel, Chairman
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of War
The Secretary of the Navy.*

*Committee on Public Information
Washington, D. C.*

Dec. 31st, 1917.

*Mrs. Norman deR. Whitehouse,
Addressed.*

Please consider this your formal appointment to be representative of the Committee on Public Information

in Switzerland, with headquarters at Berne. Your activities are to be independent in so far as every fundamental decision is concerned, but you are, of course, to advise with the American Legation at Berne, and maintain at all times a close and understanding contact.

Please use this letter in approaching the American Ambassador, in Paris, the American Minister, in Berne, officials of the French Government in France and Switzerland. The State Department is cabling both the Embassy in Paris, and the Legation in Berne, informing them of your departure so that they will be prepared for your arrival.

Believe me,

Very sincerely,

*[Sgd] George Creel,
Chairman.*

APPENDIX III.

Telegram Received January 23, 12 P.M.

Washington, Jan. 22nd, 1918.

Amembassy—Paris.

3099 January 22 7 P.M. Please give following to Mrs. Norman Whitehouse now in Paris or soon may arrive en route Switzerland. Following is paraphrase of cable from American Legation Berne quote January 15th. period. Norman Whitehouse's Mission for propaganda purposes as announced through Havas still being discussed by Germanophile press it is pointed out by press that United States grain is needed by Switzerland but instead is to receive words press further stated that

inasmuch as it is President Wilson's policy to try to bring about internal disorder in Germany the Swiss Government should not put up with such efforts in Switzerland stop. Paragraph It seems to me extremely important that I should be authorized to make formal statement denying intentions of American Government to establish propaganda bureau as Whitehouse's name has been mentioned it is important that he should not come period. Propaganda we undertake should be done in the quietest way possible and without previous announcement by press period Wilson end quote. Following reply being cabled today quote It has been freely stated in the Swiss Press that a Mr. Norman Whitehouse is coming to Switzerland from the United States for the purpose of conducting a campaign of propaganda with object to influence Swiss opinion these untrue statements are doubtlessly based upon the fact that Mrs. Norman Whitehouse has been selected by a Department of the Government of the United States to visit France, Switzerland and England for the purpose of studying conditions relating to women and children period Mrs. Whitehouse was Chairman of the New York State Equal Suffrage Campaign and it was as a result of her leadership that the Male Electorate of this Commonwealth gave the vote to the women period It is not now and never has been the policy of the United States to conduct persuasive activities in any foreign country period It relies entirely upon frank and open presentation of its aims and objects and the secret and corrupt methods of its enemies have never been attempted and will not be end quote.

Polk Acting.

GWS/H.MLB

APPENDIX IV

Jan. 25th.

Secstate for Creel quote see cable from Wilson Berne to State Department Jan. 15, also answer from Polk stating object of my appointment to investigate condition women and children. Copies both cables sent to Embassy here for my information. No previous announcement of my appointment cabled as per your letter to me December 31st. Confident you will insist State Department cables correction to Berne Legation and Embassy here misstatement of purpose of my appointment. Notice Wilson mentions hostility Germanophile Press. Our work legitimate. Cannot work under false pretenses. French & English Publicity Committees meet no hostility from the authorities. French Committee here exceedingly helpful. Leave tonight for Berne.

APPENDIX V

Paraphrase of telegram received through the Paris Embassy from Department of State dated January 26.

The Department authorizes you to inform Mrs. Whitehouse who has proceeded to Berne from Paris that the cablegram from the Department describing the nature of her mission, telegraphed to Paris for the information of Mrs. Whitehouse and to your Legation was sent from Mr. Creel. The cablegram from Mrs. Whitehouse under date of January 25 has just reached the Department and been forwarded to Mr. Creel for appropriate action. Meanwhile, please inform Mrs.

Whitehouse that she should make no statement. "Polk Acting."

APPENDIX VI

*Embassy of the
United States of America*

Paris, February 4th, 1918.

*Mrs. Norman Whitehouse,
Hotel Vendome,
Paris.*

Dear Mrs. Whitehouse,

I confirm to you the telegram which I showed you this morning, sent to the Embassy by the Department of State and quoting a telegram sent to the American Legation at Berne by the Committee on Public Information. This telegram was to the effect that it should be explained to you that the Department's instruction of January 22nd was dictated by necessity, but constituted no change in your instructions. It further stated that you are to institute your work as agreed upon, but to talk it over with Mr. Hugh Wilson before making any public announcement.

The telegram to this Embassy requested further that you be informed that the message referred to in the telegram which you sent through this Embassy when you were last in Paris, stating the object of your appointment, was sent at the request of Mr. Creel.

Very truly yours,

[Sgd] Robt. M. Bliss.

APPENDIX VII

Feb. 12th.

"For Mrs. Whitehouse from Committee on Public Information. Quote Motion Picture Campaign leaving February 13th accompanied by operator stop Cable news being improved according your suggestions stop You are to receive service and distribute and not Wilson stop () service now mailed you direct Paris representative sailing thirteenth and will connect you () stop Until films arrive suggest quiet survey of field without () stop trying arrange World for exchange articles stop Cable needs end quote.

APPENDIX VIII

*Legation of the
United States of America*

Berne, February 12, 1918.

*Mrs. Norman Whitehouse,
Hotel Bellevue,
Berne.*

Dear Mrs. Whitehouse:

I enclose a reading of a telegram which was received last night for you from the Committee on Public Information. You will note several spaces in the Telegram; these represent places where the reading was mutilated in transmission and which are impossible to decipher. If you consider any of these missing groups essential, we can wire back to have them repeated.

In view of Mr. Creel's instructions to you, I do not think that I need further instructions before turning over the press service to you when you desire to handle it, in case it is still coming to the Legation.

This telegram arrived in blue code, which is only semi-confidential, and therefore I am giving you a true reading.

Sincerely,

[Sgd] *Hugh R. Wilson.*

Enclosure:

Reading of telegram.

APPENDIX IX

Paraphrase.

*American Legation
Berne*

*The Secretary of State
Washington.*

26pp February 8, 7 P.M. A frank discussion of her situation has been had between Mrs. Whitehouse and myself. By publication of Communiqué authorized by Department's 1379 January 22/7 P.M. she believes that she is much hampered. In relation to the manner of carrying out this class of work she and I differ radically. To promote good understanding between the two countries by official publicity, she feels that a frank and open effort is not open to criticism.

Acknowledged governmental activities in propaganda are highly inadvisable in my judgment. German propaganda, since the commencement of the war, has flooded

Switzerland to such an extent that in this country public opinion in a natural reaction turns away from whatever tends toward that direction. Both the French and British Missions here recognize this fact.

After talking with Mrs. Whitehouse, [an Allied publicity agent] has called on me already. The effect which acknowledged official propaganda would make, he looks upon with apprehension and called to express his apprehension to me. *Service de Press* is the way his agency is known. The collection of press items from German papers ostensibly constitutes its labors.

The *Neue Korrespondenz*, a Swiss Organization of which a Swiss is the head, passes to the press such news as the French wish to disseminate. Through the representative of [a newspaper another] Legation acts.

One article written by an editor from conviction of his heart I am convinced, is of more value than tons of literature; and that the best type of propaganda to explain America's views consists of personal and unofficial relations with editors.

Relations which could be of benefit to our cause I feel Mrs. Whitehouse could develop with the cloak which is furnished by this *Communiqué*, but if she were a recognized emissary from the American Committee on Public Information—from reaching such relations with the editors of newspapers, she would be precluded.

Her intention is to present to Swiss officials her letters of introduction, but for a reply to this submission of our views, she has agreed to wait a reasonable period.

In answer to official or business inquiries, she desires that Legation acknowledge her official position. To do this would place Legation in the position of acknowledging falsity of *Communiqué* sent out over

my signature and prestige of legation would be injured thereby—especially would this be the case if discovered by enemy.

Discussion of the subject with Creel is suggested by both her and myself and we recommend that conclusive directions be given to clarify the situation. She has given to Creel her views in No. 2599, February 8, 6 P.M.

Wilson.

APPENDIX X

On discussion with editors of both sections of the Swiss press I have discovered that information which I can furnish Switzerland, as I have indicated before, is gratefully received, especially when a return service is connected with it. It is necessary for me to explain that my presence here is not in the interest of children and women, but that I am officially here to represent you and the activities of your committees. It is my opinion that in bringing my plans to success, I ought to present myself to the officers of the Swiss Government in Berne, this, in the present confused state of the situation, I cannot do is the opinion of both myself and Mr. Hugh Wilson. We differ mainly in that he is fearful of the effects of an open policy of furnishing news and I think that because of the essential likeness of the government of the U. S. and that of Switzerland such a policy of furnishing news would be of great value; and discussions which I have engaged in with officers of the government and newspaper men have helped this conviction. The German manner of dealing with this question which has brought discredit to the term "propaganda" resembles the other method, which Mr. Hugh Wilson

suggests dangerously close. I do not want a public statement, but under present conditions Mr. Hugh Wilson states that he would be forced to make a statement if he were to respond to official and business inquiries, that my purpose here was to inquire into the conditions of women and children and that I was not here in the interests of your committee. The instructions of Mr. Hugh Wilson and the letters of appointment issued to me are directly opposed in sense. I have consented to wait a reasonable period until Mr. Hugh Wilson is informed by the State Department before I shall act in the sense of your recent telegram and begin my work as agreed between us. It is my opinion that the present state of affairs leaves myself and Mr. Wilson open to serious doubts. Until Mr. Wilson has received further instructions, he says he will not be able to turn over to me the wireless news service. I refer to a telegram of the Legation of Feb. 8th No. 2600, which gives the ideas of Mr. Wilson in this matter.

APPENDIX XI

American Legation, Berne.

Reading of Telegram Received February 19, 1918.

Cakly.

Amlegation Berne.

1506 February 16, 7 P.M. For Whitehouse from Creel Quote Motion picture campaign shipped today with operator stop James Kerney our Paris representative traveling same boat stop Also sending large collection photographs let your situation wait until

(arrival of) Kerney and shipments when clear cut decision will be made original instructions unaltered and President personally instructed State Department of his approval of our plans but think wise to wait while before establishing office and presenting letters continue survey and unofficial contact stop Compub will send weekly cable news story signed by distinguished American journalist and story to give fair picture weeks developments America and be subject only regular censorship authors name may be published stop Negotiating with several people to do this work stop Advice giving cable address (Kerney) will wire you upon his arrival end quote.

Lansing.

APPENDIX XII

Code

Secstate Washington.

. . . February 19th. . . For Creel Quote Thanks for cable of 16th must have office to handle wireless service assume responsibility of taking one stop

Whitehouse end quote.

Wilson.

APPENDIX XIII

Telegram received March 9, 1918.

American Legation Berne

For Whitehouse from Creel. Kerney is in Paris now with motion and still pictures for Switzerland.

Get this material and examine carefully before final decision as to exhibition. Establish office without formal announcement of any kind. Directing Paris send cable service to you addressed Compub. Urge absolute harmony with Legation and utmost caution but rely upon your judgment.

Polk Acting.

APPENDIX XIV

Washington, March 13, 1918.

"3307 March 13 4 P.M. For Whitehouse from Compub. As already cabled establish office in Switzerland for independent handling motion pictures and cable news service. Register your Compub address at once. Swiss situation extremest delicacy so avoid German attack in emphasizing aims and activities. Your letters exceedingly helpful and urge continuance Present Rappard letters received and make every effort to have clear understanding with Swiss that no violations neutrality is indispensable but simply better understanding of America."

APPENDIX XV

March 9th, 1918.

*Place Bellevue,
Berne.*

My dear Mr. Stovall:

At your request, I am writing you a résumé of our conversation held on Friday morning March 8th.

I explained first to you that I had been appointed by

Mr. Creel, Chairman of the Committee on Public Information, as representative of that committee in Switzerland. I showed you my letter of appointment, a copy of which I enclose. My duties are to establish a news service of various branches, to arrange to exhibit moving picture films, and to bring to the public, in every legitimate and tactful manner, authentic information and news about America, and to receive in turn and place news or articles about Switzerland. These were my instructions before leaving America. On arriving in Paris, January 23rd, I was given a cable, which I showed you in our interview, and a copy of which I enclose. This cable quotes, (1) from Mr. Hugh Wilson, dated January 15th, to the State Department, and a reply signed by Mr. Polk.

I showed you, also, and enclose herewith, copies of (2) my cable to Mr. Creel, referring to these telegrams and saying that our proposed work is legitimate, and that I refuse to work under false pretences.

(3) A reply from Mr. Polk.

(4) Copy of a joint cable sent by Mr. Wilson to the State Department and by me to Mr. Creel on Feb. 8th.

(5) A cable from Mr. Creel saying that I, not Mr. Wilson, was to handle cable news and to institute work as agreed.

(6) Reply from Mr. Creel, dated February 16th, to our joint cable of February 8th, saying that the President had told the State Department that he approved of our plans, that my original instructions stood and that otherwise I was to await clear-cut decision. Since then no clear-cut decisions or instructions have been received by me, or, as far as I know, by Mr. Wilson.

During our conversation, after I had shown you the

cables, you made two objections; first, to my having been appointed to do this work on the score of my sex, saying that in this country, a woman would not be well received on such business as mine, and also that woman suffrage is not looked upon with favor here. When I explained that I had not come to work in any way for woman suffrage here, you said I was known to be closely identified with that movement. I have assured you that in seeking to carry out my instructions, and in my business dealings, I had never felt at any disadvantage because of my sex. I am, however, quite willing to accept a suggestion from you, if you write it to me, that I should offer my resignation to Mr. Creel, on the ground that you believe the appointment to have been a mistake, because I am a woman and a suffragist.

Your second objection I cannot, as I told you, agree to: That such work as giving the Swiss people public information about the United States is dangerous and should not be undertaken. In this connection, you spoke particularly of the sensitive state of Switzerland at the present time. I believe that this work is important and necessary, particularly at this time, and that it can be and should be carried out in a thoroughly simple and honest manner. The question of my not being the person to do the work is an open one. I believe I have the necessary experience and qualifications to do it in a business-like and tactful manner; but the question of the work being done, as I explained to you, I consider settled by Mr. Creel's assertion in his cable of February 16th, that the plan has the approval of the President. I know that Mr. Hugh Wilson objects as strongly as you do to this policy.

In our conversation, you laid great emphasis upon

my doing this work "unofficially" as a means of escaping from our difficulties. This has also been Mr. Hugh Wilson's attitude. You did not make clear to me what you mean by doing my work "unofficially" except that you especially objected to my "presenting" myself to the government. I want to repeat most emphatically, that I have had no wish to be presented in any way socially, officially or otherwise to any Government official, except as the pursuance of my duties might make it necessary. On the other hand, I cannot undertake to work for a Government Committee and to spend Government money except as a representative of that Committee. My work is of such a nature that a part of it must be done openly. I cannot approach editors to ask if they will take American news otherwise than as a representative of the Committee which can furnish it. I have found also, that it is impossible to conduct my business without proper and official recognition. During my visit in Zurich, this present week, I tried in as quiet and unofficial manner as possible, to institute my work as instructed. I was met with the objection that Mr. Wilson of our Legation had discredited my authority to act, and I was advised, before attempting any further negotiations, to obtain as an offset to the suspicions aroused by Mr. Wilson, a letter from you recognizing my position and my right to act. I agree with my advisers that this is a necessary step, because the Committee on Public Information in Washington is a department which is not known to the Swiss people and in view of Mr. Hugh Wilson's opposition, it is necessary that I should be vouched for by some one who is known. In addition to this situation in Zurich, I have found it impossible to carry out Mr. Creel's instructions, to institute my

work and handle the cable news, because I have been absolutely unable to rent an office. Three times, I have been on the point of concluding arrangements. I had thought that obstructions to my renting had come perhaps from some department of the Swiss Government. I am now led to believe that I owe the difficulty entirely to the attitude taken by the Legation. Whatever the reason is, this difficulty may be overcome by a change of attitude on the part of the Legation and by your giving me a letter, such as was suggested in Zurich, stating that I am the accredited representative of the Committee on Public Information, a department of the Government of the United States, and that I have power to act in its behalf and that my chief duties are to give an opportunity to the public and to the newspapers to obtain authentic news from America.

I have explained to Mr. Hugh Wilson and through cable to Mr. Creel that I want no public statement as to my position. But since the attitude of the Legation has not only operated to prevent the pursuance of my duties, but has directly or indirectly brought suspicion upon the character of my work, it may be necessary that I should now present myself to certain Government officials, with the simple explanation that my mission is one of good faith, and that I shall undertake no work which is not entirely legitimate in the eyes of the Swiss Government or satisfactory to it.

I wish to say that the only opposition I have met at all in Switzerland, either on the score of my sex or to the carrying out of my plans, has come from the Legation as represented by Mr. Hugh Wilson and Mr. Dulles and now by you, yourself, on your return. I have found the Swiss people, both in French and Ger-

man Switzerland, most interested in my plans of work and ready to help.

You have told me that you have received no instructions from the State Department in this matter; since, therefore, you are acting on your own initiative, in opposing this plan, which has the President's approval, I hope that in thinking it over you will conclude to withdraw from the attitude which is obstructing the work of my department, and that you will begin by giving me the letter I ask and the support I need.

In case you reach no conclusion, or an unfavorable one, by Tuesday next, March 12th, and in case no definite instructions have come from Washington by that time, I shall leave for Paris in order to consult with Mr. Kerney, another representative of the Committee on Public Information, and in order to be more free to communicate with this committee in Washington.

I hope, however, that this step on my part and the consequent delay to my work may be avoided.

With appreciation of the kindness you wished to show in your offers of social courtesies, I am,

Yours very truly,

[Sgd] Vira B. Whitehouse.

APPENDIX XVI

"The President sanctions Mrs. W's plans and believes she should begin work. Let her without formal announcement engage office, commence handling cable service, motion picture and other work. Mrs. W is not a secret agent nor is she planning violation of Swiss neutrality or intrigue by violent attacks on Germans. Her only purpose is quiet distribution cable

news service, motion picture campaign and pamphlet distribution."

APPENDIX XVII

American Embassy, Paris.

Received

March 17, 10 P.M.

3319 Blue Code

Washington,

March 15, 7 A.M.

Amembassy

Paris

3319 March 15, 7 P.M. For Whitehouse from Creel Forward to Berne if she has left Paris quote Legation promises all unofficial aid and attention but minister objects to issuance of formal letter recognizing you as representative of Committee with power to act in its behalf stop I think best not to press this point you have my letter of authorization and I prefer work inaugurated without connection with Legation or endorsement by it stop.

Lansing.

APPENDIX XVIII

March 18th.

Creel

Impossible to do effective work in Switzerland with Legation blocking every attempt stop Instance last week in Zurich in trying to place articles and news was met with objection from Swiss that Legation had discredited my power to act stop In view of Legations attitude your letter of appointment insufficient because

your committee unknown stop Reports to Washington from Legation regarding publicity situation should be viewed with doubt because of demonstrated prejudice instructions in your cable March 15th will doubtless confirm Legation in their hostility toward my work believing it impossible to achieve results under these conditions will not return to Switzerland please accept my resignation shall await final instructions regarding disposal of offices, bank balance, etc., in Paris.
Whitehouse—compub.

APPENDIX XIX

Compub Washington March 23rd 1918.

Returning to Berne to close affairs. Supplementing former cablegram, Legation offered me every social attention, but my desire was for serious work, and not to be entertained. I came to fight Germans, not American officials. Inasmuch as Legation acting apparently with approval of State department is so sensitive about any action that might offend our enemies, I think it best that nothing be made public nor circulated privately by any department at this time about situation. If any other decision reached, I ask that all cablegrams that have passed between us be published.—Whitehouse.

APPENDIX XX

Cable received in Paris, March 23, 1918.

For Whitehouse, Will Irwin in full charge of foreign educational work. Make future reports to him. While

perhaps not advisable for you to return to Switzerland, consider you so valuable to our work in general that we wish you to please stay in Paris and cooperate with Mr. Kerney pending further instructions.—Creel.

APPENDIX XXI

March 26th, 1918.

Whitehouse, Amlegation, Berne.

Washington cable for you says they are very much distressed by your last message and that President endorsed fully plan to have you go ahead in Switzerland. Says they mean to do thing you want done. However, if you feel you have been so antagonized as to destroy your effectiveness in Switzerland, they are eager to have you handle definite jobs in France, after which you can go to England and Stockholm on special missions, if you desire. Personally, I hope you will remain in France for a time to help with work.—Kerney.

APPENDIX XXII

Washington, March 23rd.

For Mrs. Whitehouse. Much distressed by your last cable. After battles of some weeks during which President came to my support, it was fully agreed that you should open office and go ahead with authority and I so cabled. If you desire to return to Switzerland, I will have to force Legation to change its attitude. If you think Legation will persist in secret to antagonize,

however, or if its attitude has destroyed your effectiveness in Switzerland, then stay in Paris with Kerney. William Irwin is now handling foreign educational work and is very eager to have you handle certain definite jobs in France, after which you can go to London, England and Stockholm on special missions if you desire. Cable me fully and understand I mean to do the thing you want done.—Creel.

APPENDIX XXIII

Paris, March 29th.

Compub Washington.

Our recent cables have crossed. This is answer to yours March 23rd, through Navintel. Have left Switzerland, saying I might return. Believe work there highly important and should continue. Have established valuable relations and should like to complete task if possible, on honest basis. Do not feel my effectiveness has been destroyed, if Legation's misrepresentations and suggestions of mystery about my work cease. Letter I asked from Stovall would insure it. Is it worth your while to force right attitude on part of Legation? If not, to whom shall I turn over details of work there? As to other missions in France, England and Stockholm, should like to know definite details before deciding. Feel it would be of value for me to go to America, steamer sailing April 6th, for full discussion concerning work in France, Switzerland and Spain. Kerney approves this suggestion. Could return immediately if desirable.

Whitehouse.

APPENDIX XXIV

*April 8th.**American Consul
Bordeaux*

Eighth Please deliver to Mrs. Whitehouse following message from Irwin Quote Husband finds it possible [Should have read, If you find it at all possible] to get along would prefer your staying in Berne because your work there would be more valuable to us than your work with the French. French High Commission reports that their Bureau in Berne has the highest regard for your work.

Sharpe.

APPENDIX XXV

Compub Washington

For Irwin: Steamer delayed at Bordeaux stop Have received Creel's cable saying eager for me to remain in Paris and yours saying you prefer my returning to Berne stop Have decided to sail on Niagara as planned not for personal or family reasons but because my work here is so unsettled and because I believe a full report and conference with you and Creel will be of value and ultimately timesaving stop I agree that I would be of more value in Switzerland than in France and have already cabled Creel conditions under which I can return there namely that Legation should be forced to officially recognize my position stop I should also need a diplomatic passport in order to facilitate my working effectively stop Failing these things my efforts in Switzerland are so hampered I will not consider returning stop If conditions are met please arrange im-

mediately for my return to Europe about May first as I shall reach America about April twenty-fifth stop Should like to bring back my stenographer Mary Dean and need an assistant who can translate English into best style German stop Suggest your giving to newspapers statement that I am returning for short stay in order to report.

Whitehouse.

APPENDIX XXVI

The White House
Washington

23 May, 1918.

My dear Mrs. Whitehouse:

Mr. Creel informs me that you are leaving for Switzerland again to resume the work already so intelligently initiated. I am glad to learn that your own convictions and investigations lead you to endorse the unreservedly American policy of absolute openness. We have nothing to conceal, no secret ambitions to further, and our activities in every foreign country are properly confined to a very frank exposition of America's war aims and national ideals.

It is a distinct service that you are privileged to render your country, and I know that this will serve at once as a reward and an inspiration.

Cordially and sincerely,
Woodrow Wilson.

Mrs. Norman deR. Whitehouse,
118 East 56th Street,
New York City.

APPENDIX XXVII

*Committee on Public Information
Washington, D. C.**May 17, 1918.*

*Mrs. Norman deR. Whitehouse,
118 East 56th Street,
New York City, N. Y.*

My dear Mrs. Whitehouse,

This is your authorization to represent the Committee on Public Information in Switzerland. In accordance with the instructions that you carry, and the desires of the Swiss Government itself, you are vested with full authority to speak for this Committee, and to act for it.

Sincerely,

*George Creel
Chairman.*

APPENDIX XXVIII

Sept. 24, 1918.

*Mr. Ellis Dresel,
American Legation,
Berne.*

My dear Mr. Dresel:

Knowing that you are probably very busy with the Prisoners Committee I have just written to Mr. Picard, who I understand is a secretary of the War Trade Board and acts on your behalf at times. I have written to Mr. Picard to say that . . . I am in receipt of a number of commercial films through the pouch,

from the Committee on Public Information in Washington. The rights to Switzerland for these films have been given to the Committee as a patriotic contribution by the owners in America, and while they are not propaganda films themselves they have been sent to me for propaganda purposes, to enable me to place our propaganda films by combining with the commercial ones. I propose now to sell them to the Compagnie Generale du Cinematographe of Geneva on the conditions laid down by the Allied War Trade Board. I have asked for the copy of the agreement which is to be signed by the purchasers of Allied films. I have asked also if there are any further formalities with which I should comply before turning the films over for use.

APPENDIX XXIX

September 25, 1918.

Blue Code

Secstate Washington

4899 . . . Important Sept. 26/9 A.M. . . . For Wartrabord Quote Number 192 question of control of cinema industry period Referring to fourth point of my telegram No. 183 Legation 4797 September 19 representative here of compub now informs me that films which have been consigned to her direct are not for propaganda purposes but are commercial films period She states that she proposes to sell these films to the Compagnie Generale du Cinematographe Geneva and she requests that a copy of the form of undertaking to be signed by ultimate consignee of films as per Wartrabord

Journal number twelve page twelve be communicated to her to be signed by abovenamed company

Before taking such action comma I should like your specific instructions as question of principle seems involved colon First under instructions received from you and according to instructions page thirteen of Wartrabord Journal cited commercial films are to be addressed to Wartrabord representative not to representative of compub Second the form of undertaking above referred to is entitled quote Agreement with the United States Wartrabord end quote and specifically refers to the release of the films to the consignee by your representative Third although Compagnie Generale du Cinematographe is on whitelist and is being favorably considered by me comma yet policy heretofore adopted and obviously to be followed is not arbitrary selection of ultimate consignee of films on this side comma but such consignee should be indicated to you in ordinary commercial ways by the applicant for export licenses on the export license application form

I suggest therefore that as to films in question instructions be sent to representative of compub here and myself period I further suggest that in future all films be consigned as under innerquote first endinnerquote above Dresel unquote

Stovall.

APPENDIX XXX

Secstate Washington

For Sisson from Whitehouse.

Quote No. 1051. September twenty-eight. Question of complications with Wartrabord about films stop Be-

fore sending you cable ten sixteen July seventeenth asking for commercial films to carry our propaganda films I obtained approval of request contained in cable from acting Wartrabord representative here Heck comma Dresel being absent stop Wartrabord representative Dresel now considers situation confused because commercial films from you are consigned to me have offered to transfer them to him or accept any formality necessary to expedite matter stop Before making decisions he awaits answer to his cable one ninety-two September twenty-sixth to Wartrabord Washington Unquote

APPENDIX XXXI

Legation of the United States of America

Berne, October 18, 1918.

*Mrs. Vira B. Whitehouse,
17 Steinerstrasse,
Berne.*

Dear Mrs. Whitehouse:

This office has today received two telegrams from Washington concerning the question of films, and I now beg to give you the following information in accordance therewith:

With regard to the commercial films received by you and as to which you exchanged some correspondence with Mr. Dresel, this office is instructed to work out a satisfactory arrangement with you. Consequently, if agreeable to you, it is suggested that you should deliver over these films according to instructions received by you, having

signed by the ultimate consignee a copy of the form of undertaking which was communicated to you by this office.

*Very truly yours,
War Trade Board,
By André Picard.*

APPENDIX XXXII

*American Legation
Berne*

Nov. 7, 1918.

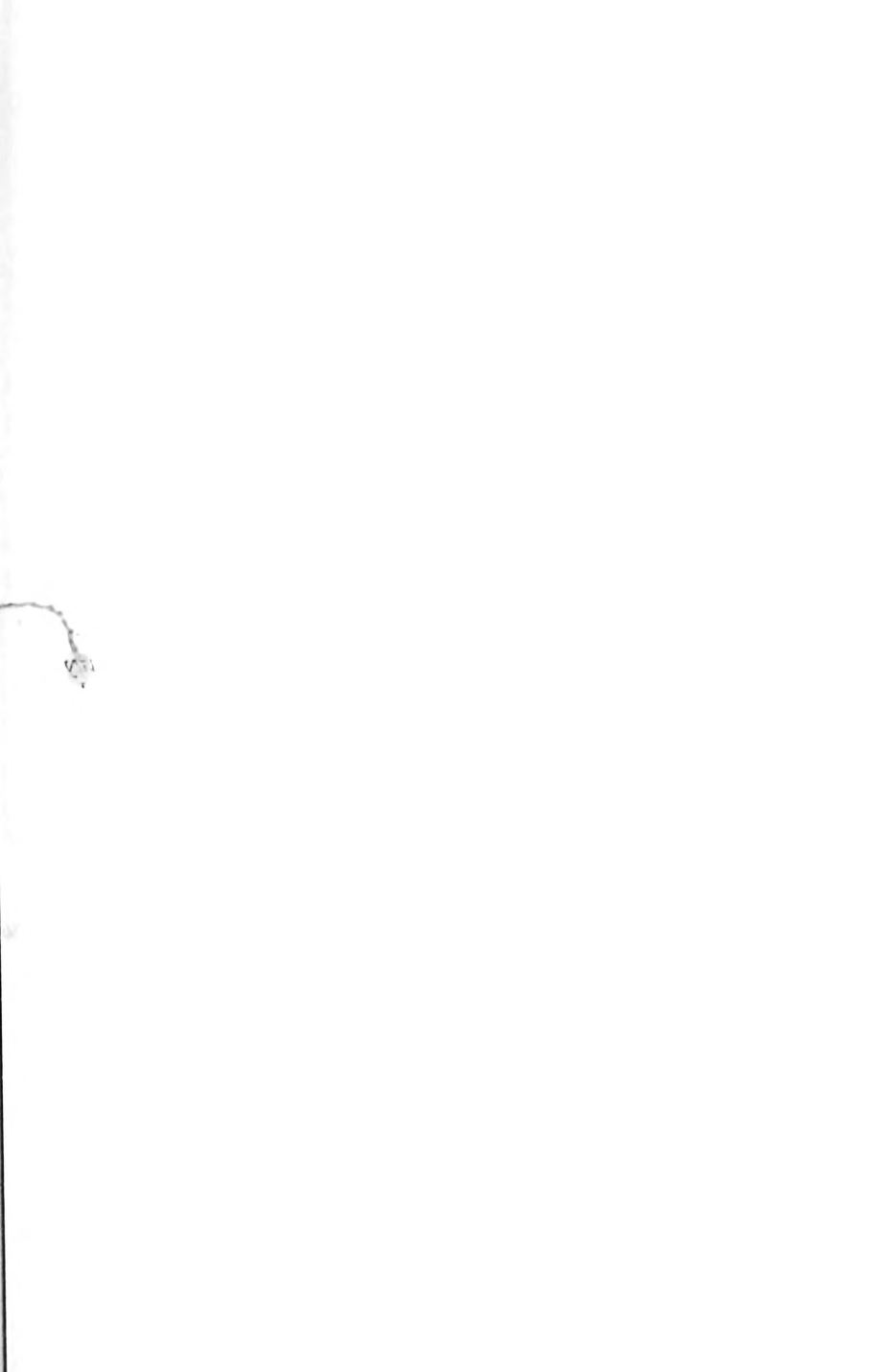
Dear Mrs. Whitehouse:

In order to give the widest publicity to the enclosed appeal from the President of the United States to the peoples of the Constituent Nations of Austria-Hungary which have achieved liberation from the yoke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, I trust that the representatives of the Allied Powers who may be in control of the lines of communication in Austria-Hungary will facilitate the passage of the messenger whom you may accredit for the purpose of publishing this message in these countries.

*Yours very truly,
P. A. Stovall,
U. S. Minister.*

THE END

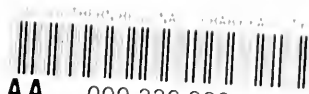
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